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Letter dated 26 October 2010 from the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations have the honour to transmit the enclosed final report of the Oaxaca Workshop entitled "Forest Governance, Decentralization and REDD-plus in Latin America and the Caribbean" (see annex).

In the light of the importance of the report and its relevance to the work of the United Nations, particularly in the environmental field, we would appreciate it if the present letter and the report were issued as a document of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

(*Signed*) Claude **Heller**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Mexico

(*Signed*) Paul **Seger**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Switzerland

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Annex to the letter dated 26 October 2010 from the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the Oaxaca Workshop: Forest Governance, Decentralization and REDD-plus in Latin America and the Caribbean

A country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests by the Governments of Mexico and Switzerland (31 August-3 September 2010, Oaxaca, Mexico)

Summary

The objectives of the Oaxaca Workshop were to identify trends, facilitate the sharing of experience and distil lessons learned on sustainable forest management, forest governance and decentralization in the light of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD-plus), to identify opportunities and threats to livelihoods and poor people; to contribute directly to the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests scheduled for January 2011 and dedicated to "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication"; and to inform discussion during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Mexico and contribute to REDD-plus design.

The Workshop was organized by Mexico's Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR) and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), and co-organized by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Intercooperation (Switzerland), the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with additional financial support from Finland, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Japan, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (United Nations-REDD) and the Ford Foundation.

The Workshop was organized around the following themes: (a) People, forest governance and forests, with subthemes (i) Governance and REDD-plus implementation and (ii) Opportunities for establishing synergies between mitigation and adaptation initiatives; (b) Landscape change, forest management and REDD-plus; (c) Forest finance and finance for REDD-plus; and (d) Rights, livelihoods and forests, with subthemes (i) REDD-plus, rights and communities and (ii) Indigenous people and REDD-plus.

The Workshop concluded that REDD-plus offered both opportunities and risks for people and forests. Sustainable forest management could make an important contribution to REDD-plus initiatives. Past concerns regarding governance were still valid, and effective governance was even more important in the light of REDD-plus,

as a new mechanism offering significant funding and requiring high levels of technical capacity and new instruments for monitoring to demonstrate achievement of emissions reduction goals. The more inclusive that REDD-plus processes were, in all phases of design and implementation and at all scales from global to national and local, the more legitimacy and acceptance REDD-plus would have, and the more effective it would be in reducing carbon emissions and improving livelihoods. Inclusive and decentralized processes would require capacity-building and knowledge-sharing at all levels.

The Workshop formulated 14 recommendations to countries and 7 to the United Nations Forum on Forests. Key recommendations to the Forum include:

- Support strengthening the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing, and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and REDD-plus.
- Promote synergies between climate change adaptation and mitigation in forests through sustainable forest management.
- Promote the linkages between sustainable forest management and REDD-plus policies and positive incentives, as REDD-plus has the potential to provide significant support to achieving sustainable forest management.
- Emphasize the particular role of sustainable forest management in combating forest degradation and its potential for enhancing forest carbon stocks.

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I. Introduction and background

1. At the closing of the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests on 1 May 2009, the Governments of Mexico and Switzerland announced an international workshop focused on Forest Governance and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD-plus)[1] in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Workshop, held from 31 August to 3 September 2010 in Oaxaca, Mexico, was a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The Workshop was organized by Mexico's Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR) and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), and co-organized by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Intercooperation (Switzerland), the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).[2]

2. The goal of the Workshop was to bring together diverse stakeholders, policymakers and international experts to share experiences and explore opportunities for generating concrete gains from governance reforms in the context of REDD-plus in the Latin American and Caribbean countries. The Oaxaca Workshop is the fourth country-led initiative focusing on the theme of governance and decentralization in forestry. In 2004, the Governments of Switzerland and Indonesia jointly organized the Interlaken Workshop on Decentralization in Forestry as a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The purpose of that workshop was to capture the global situation in the interplay between forest governance and decentralization. That was followed by the 2006 Yogyakarta Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralization in Asia and the Pacific, hosted by the Government of Indonesia and supported by Switzerland; and the 2008 Durban Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralization in Africa, organized and co-hosted by the Governments of South Africa and Switzerland. Those two workshops devoted special attention to regional realities.

3. Governance issues are of fundamental importance to sustainable forest management, the core objective of the United Nations Forum on Forests. REDD-plus, as a new climate change mitigation measure, has strong potential to alleviate poverty, but its implementation needs to be better understood in the context of forest governance. Thus, the Oaxaca Workshop aimed to improve our understanding of the linkages and synergies between decentralization and broader forest governance reforms, sustainable forest management, the improvement of living conditions for people who depend on forests, and the increasing role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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[1] REDD-plus as defined in the Bali Action Plan (FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1, decision 1/CP.13, para. 1(b)(iii)): "Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries".

[2] Other sponsors included the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Ford Foundation, the United Kingdom Government Department for International Development (DFID), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Ministry of Agriculture (Sweden), the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

4. There are many ongoing projects and activities related to REDD-plus being implemented throughout Latin America and the Caribbean that are important at the local scale. At the national scale, REDD-plusReadiness activities have been initiated in 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries with the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the United Nations-REDD Programme. Ten of those countries are preparing or are in the initial implementation stage of a so-called readiness preparation plan. This includes (a) an inclusive consultation process and preparation of institutions; (b) the analysis of drivers of deforestation and degradation and the development of a national REDD-plus strategy; (c) the development of a carbon baseline based on the REDD-plus strategy; and (d) the introduction of a monitoring, reporting and verification process with full respect for the World Bank's social and environmental safeguards provisions. Three Latin American and Caribbean countries have been chosen for piloting upscaled funding for REDD-plus investments (Mexico, Peru and Brazil). Other countries are working with bilateral donors in developing their national REDD-plus scheme. In many countries, the REDD-plus process is being conducted by institutions and authorities that are not the ones in charge of forests. Inter-institutional and intersectoral approaches need to be developed and refined at the national level, and learning processes need to be conducted to develop adequate consultation mechanisms at national, regional and local levels.

5. Several factors underscore the relevance of a discussion on the relationships among sustainable forest management, forest governance, REDD-plus and livelihoods. Forests in Latin America and the Caribbean are home to millions of people who depend directly on forest resources for their livelihoods. Current deforestation rates and their external drivers deprive those people of this resource. At the same time, in many places deforestation and forest degradation are driven by poverty: poor communities change the land use to improve their lives. Forest policies and instruments can influence REDD-plus outcomes and REDD-plus projects' and schemes' ability to provide incentives for conservation of forests, while reducing poverty.

6. The objectives of the Workshop on Forest Governance, Decentralization and REDD-plus in Latin America and the Caribbean were:

- To identify trends, facilitate the sharing of experience and distil lessons learned on sustainable forest management, forest governance and decentralization in the light of REDD-plus and to identify opportunities and threats to livelihoods and poor people.
- To contribute directly to the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests scheduled for early 2011 and dedicated to "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication".
- To inform discussions during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Mexico and contribute to REDD-plus design.

7. The Workshop brought together a mix of participants from government, civil society, research institutions, community organizations and the business sector. It was designed to facilitate sharing of insights from the diversity of countries' experiences in order to draw lessons and recommendations for action by the United Nations Forum on Forests and other key institutional actors and decision makers. It

also aimed to foster widespread sharing of information and outcomes and create a forest governance community of learning through a variety of web-based follow-up activities.

8. A total of 230 participants from 22 Latin American and Caribbean countries and 12 other countries, representing national, subnational and local governments, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples' organizations, the private sector, research, academia and international organizations, participated in the Workshop. The present final report captures the highlights of the deliberations undertaken during the Workshop.

II. Overview of sessions

Opening session

9. Speakers during the opening session reiterated the purpose of the Workshop and the importance of governance for sustainable forest management, REDD-plus and the future of forests, including a clear legal framework, accountability, capacity-building, tenure rights, benefit distribution and the anticipation of threats. The emphasis on governance and REDD-plus supports the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests dedicated to forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication and the importance of forests as much more than carbon. Mexico, in its commitment to the fight against climate change and its contributions to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Cancún, was celebrated as an appropriate location for the Workshop, and Oaxaca, in particular, was highlighted for its importance in terms of biodiversity and its indigenous communities.

Workshop themes

10. The Workshop consisted of presentations, panel discussions, round-table sessions and field trips. They were organized around four main themes: (a) People, forest governance and forests, with subthemes (i) Governance and REDD-plus implementation and (ii) Opportunities for establishing synergies between mitigation and adaptation initiatives; (b) Landscape change, forest management and REDD-plus; (c) Forest finance and finance for REDD-plus; and (d) Rights, livelihoods and forests, with subthemes (i) REDD-plus, rights and communities and (ii) Indigenous people and REDD-plus.

11. The themes and subthemes served as a way of loosely organizing presentations and discussions to allow the clustering of ideas, but also for recurrent issues to surface and flow across thematic boundaries. All presentations and background materials regarding the Workshop are available at www.cifor.org.

Field trips

12. Four field trips to nearby municipalities were organized as an integral part of the Workshop to further common understanding about key issues of the Workshop and to facilitate networking and communication among participants. The field trips were designed to provide the participants with exposure to the Mexican context and specifically to different models of community forest management, including experiences with sustainable logging and carpentry, ecotourism and carbon markets. (For more information, see annex III.)

Open spaces

13. Four Latin American organizations organized open space discussions around the following topics: the practicalities of carbon payment schemes for REDD-plus; the legal framework for REDD-plus in Latin America; forest land-use planning in the forests of San Nicolas, Colombia, in the light of climate change mitigation; and the organization of REDD-plus projects by indigenous peoples. Those meetings provided further opportunity for dialogue among participants.

III. Thematic presentations and discussions

Theme 1: People, forest governance and forests

14. The opening presentation under this theme introduced the concept and principles of governance and discussed its relevance to REDD-plus and forest people in Latin America and the Caribbean. Deforestation is caused by a combination of inappropriate forest governance and extrasectoral dynamics; that is, some decline in forest surface area may be planned. Forest degradation, however, is primarily linked with inappropriate or ineffective governance and is mainly the responsibility of the forest sector. REDD-plus is not a governance reform but will be shaped by the governance environment in the countries where it is implemented: it can improve forest governance or can be undermined by its failures and needs good governance to be effective, efficient and equitable. At the same time, the forests of Latin America and the Caribbean are home to millions of poor people; a fifth of the rural population depends to some extent on forests for their livelihoods.

15. A supportive governance environment can be defined by (a) clear, coherent policy, legal and regulatory frameworks; (b) systems for effective implementation and enforcement of those policies, laws and regulations; and (c) participatory, transparent and accountable decision-making and institutions. In spite of some progress, forest governance in Latin America and the Caribbean is still fraught with numerous problems that could affect the success of REDD-plus. They include opaque and centralized decision-making; overburdening bureaucracy; the misalignment of policies in agriculture, infrastructure and other spheres that affect forests; an emphasis on timber management instead of broader integrated forest management; insufficient funding and capacity, unclear legislation and the failure to implement laws; corruption and illegal logging; and lack of clarity and respect for local forest tenure rights and local forest knowledge.

16. Additional papers explored those and related issues more in depth. A variety of current policies have unintended negative economic, equity and environmental effects, while policies for REDD-plus are in their infancy. Synergies between efforts to curb illegal logging and REDD-plus could have an important impact on illegal forest activities. A large influx of funds through REDD-plus could also deepen corruption and further damage the reputation of forest managers. Resistance to governance reform is sometimes fierce, and change will require not only political will but also political savvy.

17. The values and benefits of forests accrue at different scales. Many values are important for local communities and tend to be favoured under decentralized systems. Other values, notably biodiversity and hydrological and climate regulation functions, benefit entire nations and the global community. Special measures are

needed to ensure that the values that are predominantly national and global are maintained in decentralized systems. Regulations and incentives, as provided by REDD-plus schemes, are the most common means of achieving that result. Markets need to be developed for environmental services (particularly REDD-plus, water protection and biodiversity), based on secure property rights in order to provide revenue support for the provision of those services and as a more equitable way for society to exert influence over which national and global values are delivered.

18. Concerns were raised over potential recentralization of decision-making over forests under REDD-plus. A centralized REDD-plus allows for national carbon accounting systems, the control of leakage and broad-based benefit distribution. But decentralization of REDD-plus implementation would increase legitimacy and allow subnational and local governments to tackle specific causes of deforestation, which vary across the landscape. A strong federal system such as that of Brazil makes an effective balance of powers between central and state governments more likely, but it is unclear where municipal governments will stand; a large influx of funds may lead to recentralization where subnational governments are weak.

19. Current international negotiations have treated mitigation and adaptation as two separate streams, with a cascading effect on national-level policy; they have been addressed as completely separate policy processes with very little communication between the two. Nevertheless, there is growing consensus on the need to explore, promote and develop synergies, especially in forest, agriculture and land use, at multiple scales: global, national, landscape and local. REDD-plus projects and policies can contribute to the adaptation of forests, people and countries to climate change if they deal appropriately with livelihood and governance issues and reduce vulnerability.

20. Almost all the interventions during the discussion period referred to concerns over the rights of local actors: indigenous rights, communal tenure or common property, the lack of tenure rights for women and the importance of decentralization, referring to coordination specifically between central and local governments and to decentralization to indigenous peoples. In this regard, the need for capacity-building and effective representation is crucial. There was also concern expressed about the reasons that governments believe that REDD-plus will be more successful in relation to ongoing governance problems, especially for reaching these groups.

21. Round-table discussions were divided into two groups. The first group focused on governance and REDD-plus implementation, exploring national experiences with decentralization, forest tenure reform and emerging REDD-plus strategies and plans to identify best practices, bottlenecks, contradictions and potential synergies for people and forests as REDD-plus programmes evolve. They considered actors of governance for REDD-plus in Latin American and Caribbean countries, preliminary lessons learned and practices to ensure transparency and accountability. The second group explored opportunities and governance mechanisms for establishing synergies between mitigation and adaptation policies and initiatives at multiple scales, from international to local.

Theme 2: Landscape change, forest management and REDD-plus

22. Important transformations are under way in tropical landscapes in Latin America and the Caribbean with implications for economic development and climate change. Landscape transformation is driven not only by national policies

and markets but also by global market dynamics associated with a growing role of transnational traders and investors. National and global trends influence social, political and economic interactions at the local level and ultimately shape land use and the socio-economic profile of landscapes. In addition to deforestation caused by development needs and market demands, degradation owing to unsustainable forest use and wildfires are among the major causes of carbon emissions in the tropics.

23. The presentations under this theme all agreed that reducing deforestation and degradation depended on making forests and forest products economically competitive with other alternatives, though money alone was not enough. Economic competitivity could be increased through policies that decrease land rent for agricultural crops and increase it for forest use, that increase the price of specific products from well-managed forests or that decrease transaction costs for forest use. REDD-plus mechanisms will need to learn from past experience and take into account the specific characteristics of the areas and populations where they will be implemented. The instruments created to promote REDD-plus (e.g., the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), United Nations-REDD, the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the REDD-plus Partnership) demand fast investments, but developing appropriate national and local processes and capacities work on slower time frames. This issue needs due consideration in the policy dialogue.

24. The tropical forest landscape can be differentiated by types of actors and production systems, each with different, dynamic social contexts leading to different land use outcomes, and thus deforestation dynamics. The five main landscape types are characterized by: growth driven by agribusiness; expansion and modernization of traditional ranching; growth and stagnation of peasant agriculture; large-scale commercial logging on public lands; and the resurgence of traditional agro-extractive economies. The pressure on forests and social effects vary among these types. To be effective, REDD-plus will have to differentiate across these types and at specific locations, and among the key actors causing deforestation, their opportunity costs and effective institutions and means of implementation. Their different objectives and behaviours mean that different actors will respond differently to REDD-plus incentives.

25. The roots of forest degradation — weak forest governance — are similar but not the same as those of deforestation, hence attempts to address degradation as well as forest conservation, sustainably managing forests and enhancing carbon sinks in REDD-plus, will require an additional set of knowledge and policies. Proposals include increased tenure security for and the participation of communities, firms and concessionaires; appropriate harvesting and silviculture; incentives for forest restoration; and taxation policies or market-based instruments such as certification or performance bonds to improve management.

26. Interventions from participants called for more research and better understanding of the political economy — the politics and the social interests that drive policymaking and land use. For example, some dynamics defied predictions that deforestation would occur, because of effective governance or social organization. Other participants commented on the problem of low or non-existent demand for certified timber, which drove down the benefits of certification. Questions were raised about the possibility that too many different agendas driving REDD-plus could dilute its effectiveness. Participants also raised the issue of scale, including the need to pay attention to individual producers or users, and to lawful

owners versus actual forest users in the context of land tenure; national versus local perspectives on policy; and the role of markets. Discussion emphasized the importance of a common understanding of economic, social and political dynamics.

27. Round-table discussions focused on development pressures on forests and people and the adequacy of responses. They explored the policy options for balancing development challenges and forest conservation in the context of REDD-plus, associated governance challenges to address the drivers of deforestation and degradation at different scales and policies needed to support sustainable forest management so that it could fulfil its promise and combine development and the REDD-plus goal of long-term carbon emissions reduction.

Theme 3: Forest finance and finance for REDD-plus

28. Investing in forestry and timber assets is nothing new. REDD-plus finance can bring a whole range of benefits, but interests vary among different stakeholders and parties. For developing country governments, REDD-plus is a new source of finance for development and an effective measure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For developed country governments, it is a cost-efficient option for global carbon offsets. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are primarily interested in its potential for biodiversity conservation. It can be an additional source of finance to make sustainable forest management competitive for investors. Many believe that it can help lift the rural poor and forest-dependent people from poverty. Politically powerful groups and vested interests are likely to consider it as yet another income opportunity.

29. It is difficult, if not impossible, to meet such a wide range of interests. Different forest-related carbon markets are likely to provide common and different options. There are three main options for REDD-plus finance:

- A fund, which could be national, bi- or multilateral or international and mobilize public and private resources;
- A market mechanism for verified/certified credits used by investors in countries listed in annex I to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- A hybrid, market/fund-linked mechanism for credits combined with certified emissions reductions.

30. There are proposals for phasing-in REDD-plus finance and implementation in three stages: strategy development and institutional strengthening; access to predictable REDD-plus finance based on clear criteria; and finally, a greenhouse gas-based instrument rewarding performance.

31. Presentations under this theme focused on financing small-scale forestry, voluntary market standards and assessment criteria and the REDD-plus partnership as an initiative designed to mobilize efforts and funds for REDD-plus. Experience with small-scale sustainable forest management in Latin America and the Caribbean demonstrates that one of its main weaknesses is the lack of affordable or accessible financing options as well as the need to enhance incomes from the sale of products and services. REDD-plus may provide additional funding options for sustainable forest management but would require attention to a number of issues. Those include the integration of REDD-plus into broader national forest finance strategies; respect

for bottom-up demand and local diversity, the need to integrate with broader livelihood strategies and building on existing structures but with awareness of their weaknesses; the use of intersectoral and strategic rather than blueprint approaches; and the promotion of innovation and knowledge-sharing, especially among forestry and finance sectors, which are worlds apart, and with communities.

32. A comparative analysis of 10 existing voluntary certification schemes suggests a variety of options that could be used for certifying REDD-plus projects or programmes. The options were analysed according to the extent to which they assessed commonly accepted safeguards and requirements for REDD-plus, including poverty alleviation, participation of and respect for indigenous peoples and local communities, support for sustainable forest management, conservation of biodiversity, accurate measurement of carbon emissions and requirements for monitoring and reporting, the credibility of the scheme's certification procedures, and others. Though no single standard covers all essential aspects of REDD-plus activities, they may provide an important starting point for innovation and testing in relation to the design of the REDD-plus finance mechanism eligibility criteria and safeguards.

33. The REDD-plus Partnership was explained as a mechanism that permits member countries to move forward with REDD-plus actions before an international agreement is finalized. Donor member countries among the 60 or more members have agreed to provide funds to make that possible, and are providing funds for readiness and implementation activities. The Partnership supports the harmonization of ongoing initiatives and is not a parallel process or negotiating forum. It is committed to transparency, inclusiveness and learning exchange and follows the three-step approach of the international initiatives of readiness (capacity-building and strategy options), the development of appropriate REDD-plus policies and measures and implementation. The Partnership will identify areas that require more funding and make recommendations to increase the efficiency of the international process.

34. Concerns were raised about uncertainty regarding the long-term availability of REDD-plus funds, the role of funds versus markets in providing more funding and the need for an international agreement to provide greater certainty for both. Fear was also expressed that funding for forest conservation might undermine ongoing successful ways in which people had maintained forests in the past. The possibility of using REDD-plus funds to purchase and reforest pasture land was raised, as well as the goal of building on community experience and management models and using REDD-plus funds to help them adapt and grow. Discussion about the potential of payments for environmental services as a REDD-plus mechanism mentioned problems that would have to be addressed such as leakage. An indigenous participant noted problems in having indigenous proposals taken into consideration by certain governments because of closed negotiations.

35. Concerns regarding standards and certification focused on the trade-offs between transaction costs and benefits. There was growing use of certification schemes by buyers interested in assuring that their funds were not causing social or ecological harm, but those had to be cost-effective. For example, clean development mechanism (CDM)-afforestation/reforestation was criticized for having very high transaction costs. A short additional presentation was made regarding a toolbox that had been developed for cost-effective social impact evaluation.

36. The round-table groups focused on identifying the conditions under which REDD-plus finance would best work for forests and people. Participants drew on lessons from national experience in forest finance and discussed key challenges, such as access by the poor and rules for participation at country, subnational and local scales, mechanisms to prevent REDD-plus capture by vested interests and how to ensure REDD-plus competitiveness in comparison to other land uses. With regard to compliance, the discussion sought to identify national-level capacity requirements, lessons from experience with voluntary standards and policies, and measures to ensure that REDD-plus finance delivered emissions reductions while also meeting equity and efficiency objectives.

Theme 4: Rights, livelihoods and forests

37. Some of the most important challenges for REDD-plus will be related to land tenure and carbon rights in achieving emission reductions, ensuring transparent benefit-sharing and determining non-permanence (or non-compliance) liabilities. In Latin America and the Caribbean, REDD-plus strategies will unfold in a context of evolving tenure systems, increasing claims to rights over ecosystem services, including carbon, and expanding forest areas under community management. An important portion of Latin America's forests was located in indigenous territories. Many of them were subject to threats from colonists, illegal loggers, extractive companies and others, whose practices endangered not only the forests but also indigenous people's territory as a whole. Hence the importance, a priori, of indigenous territories for REDD-plus and REDD-plus for indigenous peoples.

38. The first presentation under this theme provided an overview of tenure rights. Tenure regimes define who has rights over forest resources, who should be held responsible for losses and gains in forest carbon and who can claim access to or ownership of ecosystem services and their benefit streams. Latin America and the Caribbean countries had addressed tenure issues to varying degrees in their REDD Readiness Preparation Proposals, but that had generally been insufficient, both with regard to ongoing insecurity and conflict and to the failure to enforce existing formal and customary rights. Even in cases where carbon rights were clearly associated with forest tenure rights, it was not always clear what that would mean when the State is the forest owner but local people are forest managers; and it is not clear how liabilities and penalties for non-compliance would be managed.

39. Indigenous peoples, the topic of the second presentation, now own or formally manage at least 160 million hectares of land in Latin America and the Caribbean, including over a quarter of the global Amazon. The right to territory is embedded in other collective rights to autonomy or self-government but has been implemented at a scale at which most indigenous communities did not previously have governance institutions. Hence REDD-plus offers an opportunity not only for increasing the value of forests but could also support the constitution of those territories as political, social and economic entities. REDD-plus may present risks for indigenous people, however, if they do not have secure land rights or if they fail to obtain carbon rights, or if it is implemented in ways that undermine traditional culture and livelihoods. It is in the interest of both governments and indigenous peoples to come together at the same table and turn REDD-plus into an opportunity.

40. Community forest management could be an effective REDD-plus strategy. It is defined broadly as "the management of forest resources and services by

communities or groups within communities under shared rules or collective rights". REDD-plus could support community forest management where it currently exists and help to create the conditions that have resulted in successful community forest management to date. Those conditions include effective land tenure institutions and strong multi-scale governance institutions capable of implementing, maintaining and defending productive forest systems.

41. There was general agreement among the presentations that the legitimacy of REDD-plus procedures depended on ensuring indigenous and community participation in designing REDD-plus strategies; rights to carbon benefits should be clear and substantiated; internal community politics might affect benefit distribution within communities; and "one-size-fits-all" schemes would not work. That is, REDD-plus options should be adapted to local contexts.

42. The discussion involved controversial issues and lively debate. One of the central issues was the appropriate scale for effective forest management. One group defended the community scale and successful experiences, particularly of communities managing forests with traditional knowledge, and argued that institutions did not exist to manage larger territories. Another group argued that community forest management was not successful or replicable and that the territory scale was more appropriate. There was also strong disagreement on whether carbon rights should be linked to land rights. Concern was raised that, based on business-as-usual economics, larger players would gain while communities lost. Other risks were mentioned such as fraud (Costa Rica is developing an anti-fraud unit) and the need to hold negotiations with stakeholders at appropriate scales to design working agreements.

43. The round-table discussions examined policies and practices that affected or engaged communities in their effort to reduce poverty and identified opportunities and lessons relevant for REDD-plus design. Discussions were organized into two subthemes. The first group focused on rights and communities, while the second group focused on indigenous peoples specifically. Both groups sought to identify the processes and institutional arrangements needed to ensure community participation in the design and implementation of REDD-plus at different scales; policies needed to protect existing rights and ensure rights to carbon and opportunities to integrate local forest management practices in REDD-plus; and the potential for design measures that could be adaptable to local contexts. The former group discussed the relationship of community forest management to REDD-plus, and the latter focused on ways in which to design REDD-plus for a balance between traditional lifestyles and market engagement.

IV. Lessons and conclusions

44. The lessons and conclusions that emerged from the round-table discussions can be clustered around the six themes and subthemes of the Workshop: Governance and REDD-plus implementation; Opportunities for establishing synergies between mitigation and adaptation initiatives; Landscape change, forest management and REDD-plus; Forest finance and finance for REDD-plus; REDD-plus, rights and communities; and Indigenous people and REDD-plus.

A. Governance and REDD-plus implementation

45. REDD-plus provides a new opportunity to address sustainable forest management at national and local levels. It can also be considered as part of a continuum of ongoing efforts to address multilevel forest governance concerns and is only part of the solution to problems in the broader development agenda. The institutional architecture is changing, however, as existing bureaucracies are increasingly subject to monitoring by and accountability to new anti-corruption agencies, growing pressures owing to collective action by forest-dependent communities, and the role of the media in improving access to information. Concern and risks still remain, despite encouraging trends regarding declining net rates of deforestation, possible declines in illegal logging rates and the devolution of forest tenure rights to some local communities.

46. To improve forest governance for REDD-plus, there is a need to build on previous forest governance experiences, such as successful decentralization and effective local tenure rights reforms. It also needs to build on existing processes, such as Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG/FLEGT) initiatives, voluntary partnership agreements, European Commission timber legislation, the Lacey Act, and so forth. Political leadership and policy champions are needed, as well as inclusive processes and ongoing dialogue, but it must be recognized that there will be conflicts of interests. Participation means including vulnerable groups, especially indigenous peoples and women, and strengthening decentralization through greater proactive inclusion of local governments in the design and implementation of REDD-plus programmes. It also requires major efforts in capacity-building at all levels.

47. REDD-plus design needs to acknowledge the differences between and within countries and will have to be designed, and implemented transversally across sectors, which usually requires policy, regulatory and institutional reforms. Tenure rights will have to be unpacked and clarified in relation to carbon, forests and land. Transparency and accountability, including independent audits, are crucial elements of any REDD-plus scheme.

B. Opportunities for establishing synergies between mitigation and adaptation initiatives

48. Social, economic and climate change vulnerability should be the key concept that connects mitigation and adaptation, guiding actions, and development plans. Mitigation measures are often seen more as business opportunities, while adaptation is associated with costs. It is important to ensure that climate change funding considers both adaptation and mitigation as two equal priorities. Managing conservation can be a tool for both mitigation and adaptation, offering many opportunities and co-benefits when the two are integrated.

49. Adaptation occurs at the landscape scale. It must be flexible, and operates at a different time and scale from one country and community to another country and community.

50. Participants pointed out that non-forest sector agencies have to be involved in a broader debate on development paths based on non-extractive industries in order to avoid conflicts and reduce development and demographic pressures on land.

51. It is important to find a balance between the role of national governments and local actors. The national level plays an important role in providing guidelines, interacting with international actors, promoting information flow, financing and monitoring. On the other hand, extreme centralization of the State can inhibit the capacity to adapt and mitigate. Governance decentralization and a focus on community experiences are essential. It is particularly important to recognize institutions, traditions, local experiences and local knowledge (the use of local knowledge is more efficient); to promote the capacity of local authorities and communities to integrate the risks and additional costs of the impacts of climate change in natural resources management; to share and disseminate information to local communities; to decentralize funds, thus giving opportunities to communities to find solutions, and to develop finance mechanisms for their activities; and to devolve power to local authorities to promote sustainable management and mechanisms of control.

C. Landscape change, forest management and REDD-plus

52. Synergies and transversality among policies are needed to make REDD-plus work. The main drivers of deforestation are often found at multiple scales and outside the forestry sector, and cross-sectoral policies are needed to address them. Cross-sectoral integration of policies should be done with the goal of contributing to communities' human development. REDD-plus should not be developed as the mechanism that will address all social problems, but these need to be addressed through a range of interventions of which REDD-plus is part.

53. Some stakeholders have more power and influence than others, including sectors that generate pressures on forests. Communities need adequate power and influence regarding decisions that affect their lands.

54. Forests are not just carbon but provide many services. The active management of forest ecosystems and broader landscapes should be the focus of REDD-plus, as they promote sustainable use and conservation, stimulate local development and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

55. Efforts should be dedicated to strengthening governance, social capital and technical skills at the community level. Successful cases of sustainable forest management and conservation should be used as models.

56. It is important to develop and adopt instruments that help to balance actual and potential use of natural resources, such as the inclusion of a broader range of environmental services in national accounts. Resources should be directed primarily at strengthening governance in areas that face higher threats of deforestation and degradation. Fiscal mechanisms need to be strengthened to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources.

57. Central government forest and REDD-plus policies should be developed in a way that harmonizes both global and local concerns. REDD-plus strategies need to be developed in transparent and participatory processes to create necessary ownership for local implementation. This implies, at the local level, clear benefits, flexibility according to the specific context and agreement regarding compliance mechanisms. Command and control measures should continue to be implemented to

protect forests, but based on science and robust analysis and with transparency and accountability.

58. Governments should play a more active role in stimulating markets for sustainable products (such as certified wood products) and services (including carbon offsets).

D. Forest finance and finance for REDD-plus

59. Efforts to increase international public funding for forests and REDD-plus have been met with some success over the past years, with combined pledges from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the United Nations-REDD, the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the REDD-plus Partnership, Global Environment Facility and bilateral aid of about US$ 10 billion. However, the institutional design for the allocation of this initial funding at national and local levels needs development and strengthening. Clear criteria for allocation, transfer and distribution of finance and benefits, assessment of impact in terms of cost-effectiveness and equity need to be developed.

60. At the national level, forest finance for REDD-plus requires participation and political reforms for the design of adequate financial schemes and transfer mechanisms. The benefits and costs must be shared at international, national and local levels, and the concept of burden-sharing includes directing benefits at the most disadvantaged. Financial mechanisms should be decentralized wherever possible, and mechanisms such as trust funds, intersectoral committees, producer associations, multilateral and government funds should be considered. The involvement of the private sector, and federal and bilateral levels is necessary.

61. Transparency and accountability is required by the REDD-plus monitoring, reporting and verification standards, particularly in regard to benefit-sharing and distribution mechanisms, and access to information, science and data. The process will require managing expectations and establishing reasonable time frames, as reform takes time. Monitoring and intermediation should be cost-effective.

E. REDD-plus, rights and communities

62. The interaction between REDD-plus schemes and the local level was discussed, beginning with the basic concepts of rights formation processes and of rights bundles (land tenure, use rights, etc.). The main point that surfaced in the various discussions was that the land rights of local communities must be assured as a first step. That included the design of institutions, including forms of common property, that gave communities clear forest and carbon rights within nested governance structures.

63. In order to design a functioning REDD-plus mechanism, clear rules must be negotiated in a participatory process where the outcome of this process is granted legal status. The rules must include all levels from the international to the community (and even individual) and all actors and clearly specify their roles.

64. REDD-plus presents a danger of weakening community institutions. This can be countered by comprehensive access to information in local languages and by a participatory process of rule-making and design of the national REDD-plus

mechanism. Complaint and conflict resolution mechanisms must be installed in every country to guarantee that community rights related to their territory, but also procedural rights, are respected in the design and implementation of REDD-plus. Existing community structures and experiences such as community forest management and higher-level associations or organizations that aggregate several communities should be recognized and built upon in order to facilitate the participatory design and implementation of REDD-plus.

F. Indigenous people and REDD-plus

65. In order to ensure a genuine indigenous participation in the process of REDD-plus design and implementation there is a need to include established indigenous organizations, formally as an equal partner, in ongoing policy dialogues at all scales — local, national and international: learning platforms should be built for the exchange of views between indigenous peoples and scientists, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders involved in REDD-plus processes (e.g., governments, NGOs and other stakeholders) as well as among indigenous peoples.

66. REDD-plus schemes should acknowledge the rights of indigenous people to their lands, forests, carbon, and other social rights; avoid the imposition of conditions that force indigenous people to adopt other models of development, destroying their traditions and lifestyles; accommodate traditional practices, including systems of government, local culture, and natural resources management. REDD-plus has the opportunity to bring significant change, in contrast to current policies, by building a legitimate process of participation, recognizing the needs and rights of indigenous populations in all their diversity, and aligning forest policies and policies in other sectors. REDD-plus could support indigenous peoples' protection of their territories against the deforestation caused by the incursion of outside interests on their land.

V. Recommendations

67. A set of draft recommendations was developed based on the presentations and round-table discussions. It was subsequently presented to the plenary and amended based on comments and suggestions. The final recommendations from the Workshop are presented below.

Recognizing that:

The main conditions for successful decentralized forest governance remain valid also under the emerging REDD-plus agenda. To ensure these conditions, it is necessary to:

- Promote participative, democratic and transparent multi-stakeholder processes
- Develop and maintain a clear legal and policy framework
- Secure tenure and access to forest resources
- Strengthen capacity-building at all levels
- Guarantee accountability at all levels

Recognizing that:

The countries promoting REDD-plus from a buyers' perspective have the responsibility to effectively control their own carbon emissions.

The following recommendations have been made to the countries and to the United Nations Forum on Forests:

A. Recommendations to countries

- Strengthen the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing, and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and REDD-plus.
- Strengthen the human and institutional capacity of all stakeholders, particularly at the local and territory scales, in issues relating to sustainable forest management and REDD-plus, using a range of methods for sharing knowledge, including partnerships among various stakeholders. These include, inter alia, local and indigenous peoples and their organizations, women, local rightsholders, the private sector, and research and educational organizations.
- Promote efforts to address knowledge gaps on the risks and opportunities arising from REDD-plus and build the institutional mechanisms to manage risks.
- Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination and the alignment of policies to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon stocks.
- Promote the involvement of NGOs, especially national NGOs, and indigenous and other local peoples and their organizations as strong partners in designing, planning, monitoring and implementation activities related to sustainable forest management and REDD-plus. These strategies need to be developed in transparent and participatory processes to create necessary ownership for local implementation.
- Build learning platforms at multiple scales for exchange of views among scientists, indigenous peoples and their organizations and other stakeholders involved in REDD-plus processes (e.g., governments, NGOs, communities, and so forth). This includes developing negotiation skills at all levels.
- At national, subnational and local levels, improve coordination between those agencies that primarily deal with sustainable forest management and those agencies that deal with the development of REDD-plus.
- Engage with and build from local institutions, traditions, experiences and knowledge for the design and implementation of sustainable forest management and REDD-plus strategies.
- Intensify national and local efforts to design and implement fiscal policy reforms related to forests, and create participatory financial mechanisms that support REDD-plus transfer payments to strengthen national and local capacities.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of comprehensive and inclusive national financing strategies, including REDD-plus financing, within national planning frameworks (e.g., national forest programmes) that depart

from and build on national opportunities and the diversity and specificity of local realities and needs.

- Assure that the desire to spend REDD-plus funds alone not drive the process, given the longer time needed for capacity-building, institutional reform and local-level organization and consultation.
- Apply adequate social and environmental safeguard policies in the development and implementation of REDD-plus.
- Develop central government forest and REDD-plus policies in a way that harmonizes both global and local concerns, particularly the need to support poverty alleviation.
- Promote increased mutual understanding of global and local perspectives and priorities and build REDD-plus strategies from that.

B. Recommendations to the United Nations Forum on Forests

- Support strengthening the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing, and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and REDD-plus.
- Promote synergies between climate change adaptation and mitigation in forests through sustainable forest management.
- Promote the linkages between sustainable forest management and REDD-plus policies and positive incentives, as REDD-plus has the potential to provide significant support to achieving sustainable forest management.
- Share and apply lessons learned from forest governance and broader land use dynamics that drive deforestation and forest degradation and develop adequate strategies to promote sharing of cost burdens and responsibilities among global, national, territorial and local actors.
- Emphasize the particular role of sustainable forest management in combating forest degradation and its potential for enhancing forest carbon stocks.
- Strengthen the capacity of countries to meet market demands for forest products and forest services, including carbon, with better forest governance, e.g., by identifying the linkages between REDD-plus and Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG/FLEGT).
- Support further dialogues on poverty alleviation, sustainable forest management and REDD-plus based on some of the specific findings of this Workshop in the search for solutions to emerging issues and concerns.

68. The participants in the Oaxaca Workshop expressed their deep appreciation to the Governments of Mexico and Switzerland as well as the other donor countries and organizations for co-sponsoring the Workshop, and to the organizing committee for their efforts. They also expressed their sincere thanks to the Government and people of Mexico for hosting the Workshop and for their warm and generous hospitality.

Annex I

Programme of the Workshop

See http://www.conafor.gob.mx/UNFF/taller-gobernanza-y-REDD/

The CONAFOR website also contains the Spanish version of the present report.

See also coverage of the Workshop by the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* (PDF): *Oaxaca Workshop Bulletin*, vol. 180, No. 1 — Oaxaca Workshop on Forest Governance, Decentralization and REDD-plus in Latin America and the Caribbean. Final summary http://www.iisd.ca/enbvol/enb-background.htm

Annex II

Workshop papers

See CIFOR Blog: http://ciforblog.wordpress.com/

Annex III

Field trip highlights

1. As mentioned in section II above, four field trips to nearby municipalities were organized as an integral part of the Workshop to further common understanding about key issues of the Workshop and to facilitate networking and communication among participants. The field trips were designed to provide the participants with exposure to the Mexican context and specifically to different models of community forest management, including experiences with sustainable logging and carpentry, ecotourism and carbon markets.

2. Agrarian reforms following the Mexican Revolution (1912-1918) laid the foundation for community forestry in Mexico, followed by three factors that came together to support the emergence of highly innovative community forest enterprises: the participation of socially conscious reformers in positions of government power in the 1980s, the development of effective forms of communal governance of forest resources, and the rise of local institutions to administer market-competitive enterprises. Today, 151 communities are protecting over a half million hectares of forests, almost half of which are in Oaxaca.[a] These enterprises, which vary considerably from one community to another, both provide for local livelihoods and conserve biodiversity.

3. The four trips learned about the following community experiences:

- Communal land management in Ixtlán de Juárez for timber and a large, modern furniture factory, as well as ecotourism cabins and activities, communal store and credit union, high-tech regional nursery and two furniture stores in the city of Oaxaca with products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

[a] D. Bray, "Capitalism meets common property", *Americas Quarterly*, No. 41 (Winter, 2010), pp. 30-35.

- Community forestry company in Capulalpam de Mendez, known as "Pueblo Magico", which manages forests and runs a furniture factory, a spring water bottling plant, a traditional medical centre, an edible mushroom lab and ecotourism, protects a watershed and trades carbon certificates on the voluntary market.
- Community forestry in Santa Catarina Ixtepeji, which processes pine resin, bottles spring water from a community-protected area, produces timber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and also has ecotourism facilities.
- Handicraft workshop of Copal Manos e Imaginación de Arrazola, EcoAlebrijes, A.C., which also works on reforestation in the communities that provide its wood and in an archaeological site.

Comments and observations from field trips

4. These clearly successful cases in community forest and enterprise management demonstrate a balance between traditional and more business-oriented institutions. In some cases (e.g., Capulalpam's bottling plant), creating jobs for community members is more important than profits; in other cases (e.g., Ixtlán's vertically integrated forest enterprise), business efficiency is important. Community incentive structures for effective governance encourage transparent management and accounting, including clear rules, rights, responsibilities, standards and sanctions. Enterprise profits are allocated by the community assembly, with certain percentages set for reinvestment in the enterprise, social projects in the community and also for household dividends. These dividends may operate as an incentive for participation and rule compliance. The sites demonstrated that there are models of governance that are compatible with traditions and are environmentally and economically sustainable.

5. Participants raised questions about the replicability of these experiences, and how to proceed in other, more typical communities. Community organization and stakeholder engagement were central to success, as well as continuity in planning and knowledge and the training of community members in the required skills. The presence of women as workers in the different projects was noted, as was, however, their absence from leadership roles.

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication

Letter dated 3 November 2010 from the Permanent Representatives of Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Missions of Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico to the United Nations have the honour to transmit the enclosed report on a series of workshops co-organized by the Governments of Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico, the "Forest governance and decentralization workshop series".

In the light of the importance of the report and its relevance to the work of the United Nations, particularly in the environmental field, we would appreciate if the present letter and the report (see annex) were issued as a document of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The four countries would further be prepared to present their individual experiences with forest governance under one of the agenda items of that session.

(*Signed*) Paul **Seger**
Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Hasan **Kleib**
Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Baso **Sangqu**
Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Claude **Heller**
Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations

* E/CN.18/2011/1.

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Annex

Forest governance and decentralization: report on a series of workshops co-organized by the Governments of Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico

Summary

Since 2004 a series of international workshops has been organized biannually as a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests, bringing together countries undergoing decentralization and governance reform, from around the globe and within regions, in a spirit of mutual exchange and learning. The workshops in the series brought together a mix of participants from Government, civil society, research institutions, community organizations and the business sector. All were organized around key aspects of decentralization and governance theory and practice in the context of the forest sector, and considered cross-cutting issues of livelihoods, equity and sustainable development more generally. All were designed to draw lessons and recommendations for action by the United Nations Forum on Forests and other key institutional actors and decision makers.

The experiences of countries showed that decentralization is a non-linear process requiring continuous learning and dynamic experimentation. Effective decentralization requires: building consensus through an open, transparent and inclusive process; participatory decision-making; institutional, technical and human capacity-building; provision of adequate financial resources and incentives for investment; tailoring objectives to local contexts; and developing the flexibility to adapt to different situations and changing circumstances. Livelihood outcomes and impacts of decentralization and governance reform vary in different locations, and evidence of the link between governance reforms and forest sustainability is highly variable, both within and among countries that have enacted reforms.

Achieving positive livelihood, conservation and broader development outcomes from decentralization of forest management is linked to: security of tenure and equitable access to forest resources; clear and appropriately balanced distribution of fiscal, revenue and taxation powers, as well as control over decision-making, commercial rights and market access; sensitivity to cultural traditions and local knowledge; and appropriate recognition of the ancestral rights of local communities.

Recurrent issues and lessons from the workshop series included the following:

- Capacity-building at different levels is a critical element of successful decentralization and governance reform. It entails empowerment at different scales through a wide variety of means, including civic education and access to information, strengthening mechanisms for collective communication and negotiation and reinforcing organizational structures for forest resource management. New capacities and alliances among the disempowered are critical for decentralization to deliver real changes and create genuine spaces for participation and to accommodate voices from below;

- Decentralization so far has generally meant devolving the costs and burdens of forest protection and management to local governments, communities and households, with little authority and uncertain benefits. There is also a tendency

to undervalue and undercompensate the investments and contributions of communities and local peoples in forest management while giving preferential treatment to investments by external actors and corporations;

- The provision of clear and secure tenure and rights to forest resources is important but insufficient for improving livelihoods. Even when rights are clear, lack of capacity, skills, funds, technology, market access and other requisite inputs can prevent rights holders from exercising their rights;

- Existing class, caste, ethnic and gender hierarchies favour elite capture of benefits and decision-making power, impeding democratic decentralization and forest governance reforms. Strengthening the capacities of local people, especially the poor and marginalized, to organize, develop and implement rules and sanction offenders can facilitate their empowerment and enhance their share of benefits;

- Genuine participatory approaches can provide the needed balance of power between citizens and Governments at various levels, fostering downward accountability and reducing corruption and elite capture. Participation of the citizenry, including local communities and indigenous peoples, in decentralized governance is especially needed in dealing with issues such as conservation and climate change, which require broad-based citizen action.

Among the recommendations from the workshop series to the United Nations Forum on Forests, 12 were particularly relevant to forest-based livelihoods. These included the following:

- Promote the sustainable management of forests and enhanced benefits derived from them and the judicious use of market tools such as transfer payments and voluntary partnership agreements;

- Eliminate barriers and improve the access of local communities to markets, as well as to the revenue generated by the sustainable management of forests, including through better distribution of fiscal resources;

- Enhance the transparency of governmental policies and actions directed towards forest law enforcement and pursue holistic anti-corruption efforts at all levels;

- Support strengthening the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and in schemes, such as REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation), where sustainable forest management is a robust and credible approach in maintaining and enhancing the economic, social and environmental values of forests for the benefit of present and future generations.

I. Background

1. Over the past two and a half decades, many countries around the world have embarked on forest decentralization and governance reform programmes in response to a variety of internal and external pressures. Typically, these programmes were meant to contribute to the achievement of a range of conservation and development objectives, including improved management and sustainable development of all types of forests, greater equity in distribution of benefits from resources, poverty reduction and enhanced democracy. Since 2004 a series of four international workshops has been organized biannually as a country-led initiative to bring together countries undergoing decentralization and governance reform, from around the globe and within regions, in a spirit of mutual exchange and learning in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other regional and national forest governance initiatives. Outputs from the workshop series thus far include three reports to the United Nations[1] and three published volumes[2] containing selected papers from the first three workshops.

2. All workshops in the series brought together a mix of participants from Government, civil society, research institutions, community organizations and the business sector. All were organized around key aspects of decentralization and governance theory and practice in the context of the forest sector and considered cross-cutting issues of livelihoods, equity and sustainable development more generally. All employed a mix of presentations, panel discussions, working group sessions and field trips. All were designed to facilitate the sharing of insights from the diversity of experiences of countries in order to draw lessons and recommendations for action by the United Nations Forum on Forests and other key institutional actors and decision makers.

3. The Governments of Switzerland and Indonesia jointly organized the first workshop in the series, on the theme "Decentralization, federal systems of forestry and national forest programmes", in Interlaken, Switzerland, in April 2004. The workshop was co-sponsored by several other Governments and organizations which provided technical, financial and/or logistical support.[3]

4. Attended by 160 people from 51 countries representing 70 per cent of global forest area, the Interlaken workshop provided a global overview of ongoing and

[1] E/CN.18/2005/10; E/CN.18/2009/16, annex; and E/CN.18/2011/15, annex.

[2] Carol J. Pierce Colfer and Doris Capistrano, eds., *The Politics of Decentralization: Forests, Power and People* (London, Earthscan Publications, 2005); Carol J. Pierce Colfer, Ganga Ram Dahal and Doris Capistrano, eds., *Lessons from Forest Decentralization: Money, Justice and the Quest for Good Governance in Asia-Pacific* (London, Earthscan Publications, 2008); and Laura A. German, Alain Karsenty and Anne-Marie Tiani, eds., *Governing Africa's Forests in a Globalized World* (London, Earthscan Publications, 2009).

[3] The workshop was co-organized by the Centre for International Forestry Research and co-sponsored by the Governments of Brazil, Canada, Ghana, Japan, the Russian Federation, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Technical, financial and/or logistical support was provided by the secretariats of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the National Forest Programme Facility of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Bank's Programme on Forests, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the World Wide Fund for Nature, the World Resources Institute, the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Intercooperation (Switzerland).

planned decentralization processes in forest management. Workshop discussions focused on conceptual and operational aspects of decentralization, namely: (a) allocation of roles and responsibilities and coordination at different levels and across sectors; (b) policy, regulatory frameworks and equitable benefit-sharing; (c) participation, conflict and multi-stakeholder processes; (d) financial incentives, promoting investment and private sector partnership; (e) capacity-building, technical skills and information; and (f) maintaining ecosystem functions, sustaining forest productivity and appropriate application of knowledge and technology.

5. In September 2006, the Government of Indonesia hosted the second workshop in the series, on the theme "Forest governance and decentralization in Asia and the Pacific", in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The first of three regional workshops following Interlaken, the Yogyakarta workshop also built on an earlier regional workshop on decentralization and devolution of forest management in Asia and the Pacific that had been held in Davao, the Philippines, in 1998 under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Yogyakarta workshop was organized as an activity of the Asia Forest Partnership and co-sponsored by the Governments of Japan, the Philippines and Switzerland, with assistance from several other organizations.[4] Attended by over 120 participants from within and beyond the Asia-Pacific region, the workshop continued the discussion on a range of issues identified at Interlaken. There was greater emphasis, however, on the requisites for economically and technically viable decentralization and sharper focus on core issues of the Asia Forest Partnership, particularly on: (a) corruption and illegality; (b) tenure, rights and equity; and (c) forest fires, land use and rehabilitation.

6. The third workshop in the series, on the theme "Forest governance and decentralization in Africa", was held in Durban, South Africa, in April 2008. The workshop was co-organized by the Governments of South Africa and Switzerland and co-sponsored and supported by several other Governments and organizations.[5] The Durban workshop sought to develop a common understanding of concepts and practices of decentralization in the context of African forest governance and to identify opportunities for coordinated policy responses, capacity-building and implementation of best practices and approaches to decentralization and sustainable forest management at different levels. Discussions and recommendations were organized around three major themes: (a) decentralized forest management and livelihoods; (b) decentralization, conservation and sustainable forest management; and (c) international trade, finance and investment in forest governance reform. The workshop was attended by 187 participants from 45 countries, including 34 countries in Africa.

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[4] Supporting organizations included the Centre for International Forestry Research, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammerarbeit, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Intercooperation.

[5] The Durban workshop was sponsored by the Governments of South Africa and Switzerland (Swiss Federal Office for the Environment), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the South African Forestry Company Limited, Sappi, Mondi and the eThekwini Metropolitan Council. The Centre for International Forestry Research and Intercooperation provided technical and logistical support.

7. The fourth and latest workshop in the series, on the theme "Forest governance, decentralization and REDD+ in Latin America and the Caribbean", was held in Oaxaca, Mexico, from 31 August to 3 September 2010. The workshop was organized by the Governments of Mexico and Switzerland, with sponsorship and assistance from other Governments and organizations.[6] The workshop examined decentralization and governance in the context of global efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, identified lessons and considered possible opportunities, synergies, trade-offs and threats. Plenary presentations, round tables and open space discussions focused on: (a) rights and tenure for forests, people and carbon; (b) opportunities for poverty alleviation and sustainable forest management in indigenous territories; and (c) community forest management and REDD+. Field trips highlighted environmental service payment schemes, community forestry and sustainable forest management as they relate to REDD+. The workshop was attended by 230 participants from 34 countries, including 22 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

II. Key issues and findings from the workshops

Interlaken workshop

8. The Interlaken workshop revealed the diverse forms and pathways to decentralization taken by different countries, their varied motivations and uneven pace and progress. Typically, there is a significant gap between the policy and practice of decentralized governance, and inconsistencies, often inequities as well, in the allocation of roles, responsibilities and rewards for forest management. Analysing federal systems, where natural resources are typically managed in a decentralized manner, the workshop concluded that in both federal and unitary systems at least three framework elements are required for effective decentralized forest governance: (a) appropriate sharing of authority to make decisions and raise revenues, and sharing of responsibilities among Government levels according to their abilities and needs; (b) effective enforcement and accountability at all levels of Government to ensure that Government agencies carry out their mandates fairly, efficiently and effectively; and (c) effective linkages with other sectors that affect or are affected by the forest sector.[7]

9. The experiences of countries showed decentralization to be a non-linear, at times cyclical, process requiring continuous learning and dynamic experimentation. Effective decentralization requires: (a) building consensus through an open, transparent and inclusive process; (b) participatory decision-making;

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[6] The Oaxaca Workshop was organized by the Comisión Nacional Forestal of Mexico and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, and co-organized by the Centre for International Forestry Research, Intercooperation (Switzerland), the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Inter-American Development Bank Group and the United States Agency for International Development. Other sponsors included the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, the Ministry of Agriculture of Sweden, the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Ford Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

[7] Carol J. Pierce Colfer and Doris Capistrano, "Decentralization: issues, lessons and reflections" in *The Politics of Decentralization: Forests, Power and People* (see footnote 2).

(c) institutional, technical and human capacity-building; (d) provision of adequate financial resources and incentives for investment; and (e) tailoring objectives to local contexts and developing the flexibility to adapt to different situations and changing circumstances. For decentralized forest management to be sustainable, it must deliver significant, net positive benefits to local communities and households, not simply transfer the burden of forest management. High priority needs to be accorded to the empowerment and capacity-building of local communities to effectively manage their natural resources.

10. Successful decentralization requires the following: formulation of clear enabling legal and policy frameworks and timely and wide distribution of this information; integration of the decentralization process into national forest programmes; achievable objectives; clear allocation of roles, responsibilities, resources and accountability; and mechanisms for conflict resolution. Analysis of livelihood, conservation and broader development outcomes from decentralization showed success to be linked to the following: security of tenure and equitable access to forest resources; clear and appropriately balanced distribution of fiscal, revenue and taxation powers, as well as control over decision-making, commercial rights and market access; and sensitivity to cultural traditions and local knowledge and appropriate recognition of the ancestral rights of local communities.

Yogyakarta workshop

11. Based on analysis of the experiences of countries in the Asia and Pacific region, the Yogyakarta workshop reinforced the conclusions from Interlaken. Long-standing problems with participation, equity, tenure, rights, livelihoods and capacities in the process of decentralization were highlighted. Often, implementation guidelines and mechanisms are absent or unclear, and resistance or sabotage by powerful stakeholders that stand to lose from decentralization and governance reform can derail the implementation of even the best-intentioned policies. The viability of decentralized forest governance over sufficient time frames requires fundamental changes in the rules of the game, especially with regard to how rights, roles, responsibilities and rewards are allocated and by whom.

12. The Yogyakarta workshop also identified other areas of concern, including: (a) the challenges of undertaking large-scale conservation; (b) ensuring long-term financing for decentralization and governance reform; (c) providing adequate incentives for decentralized forest management, especially where forest quality is poor and markets are underdeveloped; and (d) addressing corruption and illegal activities under decentralized forest governance regimes. Getting the pace and sequencing of decentralization reforms right is also a major challenge. The experience of Indonesia has shown, for example, that rapid decentralization without adequate institutional capacities in place can encourage opportunistic behaviour and lead to higher rates of deforestation.

13. Case studies showed that disagreements over who had rights over forests and forest resources lay at the root of conflicts and destructive forest practices. Rights have to be clear and secure and need to be protected from competing external and local interests, including the State and its agencies. Even when rights are clear, lack of capacity can prevent rights holders from claiming or exercising their rights.

14. Clarity on which level or agency of Government is responsible for regulation, enforcement and conflict resolution is equally important. Confusion and

inconsistencies in policies, laws and regulations that tend to accompany especially the initial stages of decentralization and governance reforms can create or exacerbate grey areas in which corruption and illegality can flourish. In some cases, however, effective collective action and decentralized forest governance have resulted in more effective regulation and forest law enforcement.

15. Local people can be ensnared in webs of illegality, especially when laws and regulations are inconsistent or subject to conflicting interpretations. Unrealistic prohibitions, without the provision of alternatives, and overly burdensome bureaucratic requirements, coupled with high transaction costs of compliance, can adversely affect livelihoods by making it difficult for small-scale forest users to comply with legal requirements.[8] The chronically poor, women and marginalized groups are often the most adversely affected.

Durban workshop

16. In Africa, governance reform and decentralization processes have taken various forms and face many of the same issues as in other regions. Identified issues include increasing conflict, cronyism, corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, social inequities and elite capture. Although the reforms have also created real opportunities, there remains the challenge of putting democratic decentralization into practice for more sustainable forest management and equitable distribution of benefits. Women have been particularly disadvantaged in benefit-sharing, and their concerns, needs and interests tend to be ignored, particularly in formal governance settings.

17. Livelihood outcomes and impacts vary in different locations, and evidence of the link between governance reforms and forest sustainability is highly variable, both within and among countries that have enacted reforms. In many countries, community-based forest management is spreading rapidly and represents an important strategy in supporting livelihoods where economic opportunities are severely limited.

18. Large-scale conservation and management of protected areas based on command-and-control approaches prevalent in the region run counter to and pose a major challenge for decentralized governance. These externally imposed conservation models render invisible the role, legitimacy and innovative potential of local actors, including numerous cases of local resource management and de facto decentralization.[9] They also have not satisfactorily addressed issues of indigenous rights. Although customary or community-based tenure remains the dominant tenure

[8] Yati Bun and Amele Imalal, "Governance and community-based forestry in Papua New Guinea", paper presented at the Yogyakarta workshop; Luca Tacconi, Marco Boscolo and Duncan Brack, "National and international policies to control illegal forest activities" (Bogor Barat, Indonesia, Centre for International Forestry Research 2003); Krystof Obidzinski and others, "Illegal forest activities in Berau and Kutai Timur: impacts, driving forces and remedies", Forests and Governance Programme Governance Brief No. 26 (Bogor Barat, Indonesia, Centre for International Forestry Research, 2006); Marcus Colchester and others, "Justice in the forest: rural livelihoods and forest law enforcement" (Bogor Barat, Indonesia, Centre for International Forestry Research, 2006).

[9] Marieuw Chimère Diaw, with David Blomley and Guillaume Lescuyer, "Elusive meanings: decentralization, conservation and local democracy", keynote paper presented at the Durban workshop.

type in almost all sub-Saharan countries, tenure policies in many countries tend not to recognize indigenous tenure or are aimed at its replacement.

19. Decentralization and governance reforms have been both facilitated and complicated by the increased trade, investment and financial flows into the region. The dysfunction of public institutions in many countries was identified as one important stumbling block to governance reform,[10] although institutional innovations such as third-party certification and the use of independent observers can promote change. How local communities are affected and how they can engage with fiscal and governance reforms to their benefit emerged as major concerns. The issue of corruption at all levels was also identified as important and in need of critical action, especially at the highest levels.

20. The dearth of mechanisms to track progress and exchange lessons to inform action, as well as the absence of a framework to value and capitalize forest resources, have undermined progress towards decentralization and governance reforms in Africa. Inadequate technical competencies and a lack of funding and appropriate incentives have constrained effective reform implementation.

Oaxaca workshop

21. Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, many REDD+-related projects and activities are under way, creating both opportunities and challenges for sustainable forest management and local livelihoods. Deforestation and forest degradation threaten the livelihoods of millions of people in the Latin America and Caribbean region that depend directly on forests. Both deforestation and forest degradation are a result of inappropriate or ineffective governance, but, while deforestation is largely driven by extrasectoral factors, forest degradation is driven primarily by factors within the forest sector. There was agreement among workshop participants that, although REDD+ was not a governance reform programme, it could, and would have to, contribute to improving governance. Otherwise, it would be undermined by governance failures that, despite some progress, remained widespread throughout the region.

22. Common governance weaknesses identified included the following: opaque and centralized decision-making; overburdened bureaucracy; misalignment of policies in agriculture, infrastructure and other spheres that affect forests; emphasis on timber management instead of on broader integrated forest management; insufficient funding and capacity; unclear legislation and the failure to implement laws; corruption and illegal logging; and lack of clarity and respect for local forest tenure rights and local forest knowledge. These weaknesses raised concerns about the rights of indigenous peoples, common property and communal tenure, and the lack of tenure rights for women. They also pointed to the importance of decentralization, specifically between central and local governments and decentralization to indigenous peoples, and the need for capacity-building and effective representation.

23. There was broad agreement that reducing deforestation and forest degradation depended on making forests and forest products economically competitive with other alternatives, although money alone was not enough. Policies that decrease

[10] Alain Karsenty, "The new economic 'great game' in Africa and the future of governance reforms of the forestry sector", keynote paper presented at the Durban workshop.

agricultural land rent and increase forest rent, and those that increase the price of products from well-managed forests or decrease transaction costs for forest use, can help increase the economic competitiveness of forests. To be effective, REDD+ will have to take account of the different actors and forces involved in deforestation in a range of circumstances and the related differentiated opportunity costs, institutions and means of implementation. Policy dialogues will also need to consider the mismatch between the short time frames built into existing REDD+ instruments and the long time period required for developing appropriate national and local processes and capacities.

24. In the Latin America and Caribbean region, the lack of affordable and accessible financing options for small-scale sustainable forest management has been a constraint. REDD+ could provide additional funding options for sustainable forest management, but would need to address a number of issues. These include the integration of REDD+ into broader livelihood strategies and building on existing structures with awareness of their weaknesses, the use of intersectoral and strategic rather than blueprint approaches and the promotion of innovation and knowledge-sharing, especially among the forestry and finance sectors and with communities.

25. Issues related to land tenure, carbon rights and indigenous territories are the most important challenges for REDD+ in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Thus far, countries in that region have insufficiently addressed tenure issues in their REDD readiness preparation proposals. There was general agreement that the legitimacy of REDD+ procedures depended on ensuring indigenous and community participation in designing REDD+ strategies, and clear and substantiated rights to carbon benefits. There was also recognition that internal community politics might affect benefit distribution within communities, and that "one-size-fits-all" schemes would not work.

III. Recurrent issues, lessons and recommendations

Recurrent issues and lessons

26. Adequate and honest consultation, transparent and accountable decision-making and the adoption of genuinely participatory approaches remain major gaps in decentralization and governance reforms across the globe. Central Governments appear to have persistent and pervasive difficulties in relinquishing authority and sharing finances, both important prerequisites for genuine decentralization.

27. Decentralization has generally meant devolving the costs and burdens of forest protection and management to local governments, communities and households, with little authority and uncertain benefits. There is also a tendency to undervalue and undercompensate the investments and contributions of communities and local peoples in forest management while giving preferential treatment to investments by external actors and corporations.

28. The provision of clear and secure tenure and rights to forest resources is important but insufficient for improving livelihoods. Even when rights are clear, lack of capacity, skills, funds, technology, market access and other requisite inputs can prevent rights holders from exercising their rights.

29. Existing class, caste, ethnic and gender hierarchies favour elite capture of benefits and decision-making power, impeding democratic decentralization and

forest governance reforms. Strengthening the capacities of local people, especially the poor and marginalized, to organize, develop and implement rules and sanction offenders can facilitate their empowerment and enhance their share of benefits.

30. Decentralization can end up decentralizing corruption by fragmenting centrally organized mechanisms for rent-seeking. Breaking the links between corrupt business interests and State decision makers is essential in the fight against corruption.

31. Capacity-building at different levels is a critical element of successful decentralization and governance reform. It entails empowerment at different levels through a wide variety of means, including civic education and access to information, strengthening mechanisms for collective communication and negotiation and reinforcing organizational structures for forest resource management. New capacities and alliances among the disempowered are critical for decentralization to deliver real changes, create genuine spaces for participation and accommodate voices from below.

32. Decentralization and governance reforms are best designed as iterative learning processes, which can be fine-tuned over time. This requires attitudinal change that will grant actors and stakeholders, especially at the lower levels where actions are taken, sufficient space for experimentation and allow for some failures as part of the learning process.

33. Genuine participatory approaches can provide the needed balance of power between citizens and Governments at various levels, fostering downward accountability and reducing corruption and elite capture. Participation of the citizenry, including local communities and indigenous peoples, in decentralized governance is especially needed in dealing with issues such as conservation and climate change, which require broad-based citizen action.

Recommendations

34. The reports on three of the four workshops organized as country-led initiatives in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests each included a number of recommendations for the Forum to consider and encourage countries to take specific action. Recommendations with particularly important implications for livelihoods and sustainable forest management are repeated below. The Forum may wish to highlight these recommendations and urge countries to take needed action:

- Promote the decentralization of forest management, taking into account the points of view of all relevant stakeholders, providing support for their empowerment, stimulating their participation in forest management decision-making processes at all levels and recognizing that in decentralization one size does not fit all;
- Formulate appropriate approaches to maintain protected areas while enabling traditional use by the indigenous/local people and forest dwellers;
- Promote the sustainable management of forests and enhanced benefits derived from them and judicious use of market tools such as transfer payments and voluntary partnership agreements;
- Further promote the valuation of forest environmental services and encourage fair compensation for these services, including through market mechanisms;

- Eliminate barriers and improve the access of local communities to markets, as well as to the revenue generated by the sustainable management of forests, including through better distribution of fiscal resources;
- Develop principles to guide institutional choice for equitable representation;
- Enhance the transparency of governmental policies and actions directed to forest law enforcement and pursue holistic anti-corruption efforts at all levels;
- Strengthen the human and institutional capacity of all stakeholders, particularly at the local level, using a range of methods for sharing knowledge, including the promotion of partnership among stakeholders and across sectors;
- Support strengthening the inclusion of local people, including indigenous peoples and women, in decision-making, benefit-sharing and preservation of their cultural and social values through sustainable forest management and in schemes, such as REDD+, where sustainable forest management is a robust and credible approach in maintaining and enhancing the economic, social and environmental values of forests for the benefit of present and future generations;
- Share and apply lessons learned from forest governance and broader land-use dynamics that drive deforestation and forest degradation, and develop adequate strategies to promote sharing of cost burdens and responsibilities among global, national, territorial and local actors;
- Strengthen the capacity of countries to meet market demands for forest products and forest services, including carbon, with better forest governance, for example, by identifying the linkages between REDD+ and forest law enforcement and governance/forest law enforcement, governance and trade;
- Support further dialogues on poverty alleviation, sustainable forest management and REDD+ based on some of the specific findings of the Oaxaca workshop in the search for solutions to emerging issues and concerns.

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Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication

Letter dated 9 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the summary report of the major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests on the theme "Applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction: strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the United Nations Forum on Forests", which was held in Accra, from 26 to 30 July 2010.

(*Signed*) Leslie K. **Christian**
Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations

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Applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction: strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the United Nations Forum on Forests

Summary report of the major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Accra, 26-30 July 2010

Summary

The effective participation of major groups is crucial to the success of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Creating and enhancing opportunities for active and effective major groups participation is thus a critical task for major groups, as well as Governments and other stakeholders of the United Nations Forum on Forests. To address this need, major groups organized a major groups initiative workshop in support of the Forum. The workshop took place in Accra, from 26 to 30 of July 2010, and brought together approximately 70 key representatives from 30 countries. The central goal of the event was to actively engage major groups and support the United Nations Forum on Forests process by developing input and policy recommendations for the ninth session of the Forum on the theme "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication".

The major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests was hosted by the Government of Ghana. The initiative was made possible through financial support from the Governments of Norway, Finland, United Kingdom, Austria and Canada, as well as from the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

In approaching the overall theme, participants heard presentations on a number of case studies, and focused their discussions on four topics: tenure rights, access and benefit sharing; traditional forest-related knowledge; community-based forest enterprises; and women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups' leadership for sustainable forest management. Based on the workshop discussions, key recommendations were developed for presentation at the ninth session of the Forum in January 2011.

In addition to developing policy recommendations for that session, participants also discussed ways to enhance participation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests, and begin planning activities in support of the International Year of Forests.

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I. Background and context

1. In 2009, the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests passed a resolution to "[e]ncourage Member States and request the UNFF secretariat to explore ways to increase stakeholder and civil society participation, including indigenous and other local and forest dependent communities … in future sessions of the Forum".[1]

2. Scheduled in early 2011, the ninth session of the Forum will focus on the theme "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication" through: (a) community-based forest management; (b) social development and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure; and (c) social and cultural aspects.

3. As the work of major groups has significant impact on forest communities, they agreed to organize a multi-stakeholder workshop designed to support the Forum process and prepare concrete policy recommendations to be presented to the ninth session of the Forum.

4. The resulting workshop, which took place in Accra, Ghana, from 26 to 30 July 2010, brought together approximately 70 key representatives from 30 countries. The central goal of the event was to actively engage major groups and support the United Nations Forum on Forests process by developing input and policy recommendations for the ninth session of the Forum.

II. Opening ceremony

5. Speakers at the opening ceremony included Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, as the keynote speaker, Michael Gort, Charge d'affaires, Canadian High Commission and Henry Ford Kamel, Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, on behalf of Collins Dauda, Member of Parliament and Minister of Lands and Natural Resources for Ghana.

6. Speakers at the opening ceremony emphasized a number of key points:

(a) The workshop is a unique opportunity to bring together the major groups that are recognized under the United Nations Forum on Forests. A wide diversity of expertise and perspectives can contribute to a strong outcome in terms of recommendations to the ninth session of the Forum.

(b) On-the-ground experience is crucial in informing policy decisions. Workshop participants thus bring their knowledge of specific issues to the table in order to enrich the discussion and provide meaningful policy recommendations.

(c) Strong participatory models are necessary in order to produce strong policy outcomes. Therefore, major groups' participation in the workshop is a step towards strengthening major groups' participation in the Forum process.

7. Individual speakers highlighted a range of important issues. Lambert Okrah, as chair of the organizing committee and the international coordinator for the workshop, introduced and welcomed participants to the workshop. He highlighted

[1] See E/CN.18/2009/20-E/2009/42.

the difficult task ahead, but voiced his enthusiasm for the level of experience and knowledge coming from the diverse major groups attending the workshop. He emphasized that Governments can only boast of engaging in democratic governance when they create the opportunity for engagement with other stakeholders and take into account their contributions in arriving at policy decisions.

8. On behalf of Minister Collins Dauda, Henry Ford Kamel welcomed participants to Ghana, thanked the workshop sponsors and organizers, and performed the official opening. He affirmed Ghana's commitment to sustainable forest management, and to the success of the United Nations Forum on Forests process. He highlighted a number of recent initiatives that are under way in Ghana to prevent forest degradation, mainstream forest issues into national plans, and support local forest-dependent peoples. He noted the work that Ghana has done towards implementing the national forest programme and the important link with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the goal of poverty eradication. He appealed to delegates to bring forward constructive suggestions that can make a difference in the livelihoods of local and indigenous peoples the world over.

9. Mr. Michael Gort, the Chargé d'affaires, Canadian High Commission and head of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Ghana welcomed participants on behalf of the Government of Canada. He noted the commitment of the Government of Canada to good governance and sustainable forest management, and highlighted specific initiatives where Canada is supporting civil society. He noted that an important part of Canada's work in promoting sustainable forest management involves building institutional capacity and professional skills among local people.

10. Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, congratulated major groups and the Government of Ghana for holding the workshop. She expressed appreciation to the Governments and institutions that provided financial support for the event, and highlighted the commitment of the Forum secretariat to strengthening the involvement of major groups in the work of the Forum. Noting that Ghana is an example of a Member State that is engaged in reforming its forest policies and enhancing the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, Ms. McAlpine stressed the need for major groups to utilize the opportunity provided by the broad membership of the Forum to strategically participate in the forest-policy deliberations. She encouraged major groups to put forth ideas for ensuring the success of the 2011 International Year of Forests, which will be officially launched in New York in February 2011 during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the Forum. She argued that there is a unique opportunity to achieve a high-profile focus on forests, and urged participants to utilize the holistic, or "360 degree", mandate of the Forum to make effective inputs into other forest-related deliberations. She suggested that the discussions being carried out under other forums, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) should not be ignored, arguing rather that those concerned with the Forum should watch those processes closely.

III. Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication: ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

A. Presentation of case studies

11. A number of case studies were prepared and presented in order to inform and stimulate discussions. Full case study texts are available for download from the workshop website: www.mgi-forests.org.

1. Globally significant biodiversity areas and their impacts on livelihoods: a case study of the Tano Offin area in the Atwima Mponua and Ahafo Ano districts of the Ashanti region of Ghana, Matilda Akua Afriyie, Conservation and Development Foundation, Ghana

12. The case study highlighted the significance of globally significant biodiversity areas for forest-dependent communities in Ghana, but noted ongoing challenges. Ms. Afriyie emphasized the importance of promoting alternative livelihood schemes so that globally significant biodiversity areas do not negatively impact the ability for local communities to secure access to forest resources. According to Ms. Afriyie's study, many individuals in forest fringe communities experience livelihood difficulties as a result of their lack of access to forest resources. This is accentuated by the designation of globally significant biodiversity areas owing to the restrictive nature of the policy. The case study underscored the importance of preserving biodiversity, as well as providing alternative livelihood opportunities for individuals in forest fringe communities.

2. Harnessing indigenous and traditional forest-related knowledge: the case of North Eurasian countries, Andrey Laletin, Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russian Federation (primary author) and Vladimir Bocharnikov (co-author)

13. The paper provided an overview of how local and indigenous knowledge has contributed to traditional forest management in Eurasia, and examined traditional forest-related knowledge in Russia in more detail. Dr. Laletin stressed the importance of valuing traditional forest-related knowledge in promoting sustainable forest management. His case study supported the notion that current scientific practices designed for the management of forests may not be as sustainable as those traditionally practised by various local and indigenous peoples. Therefore, he concluded that it is important to study, understand and incorporate traditional forest-related knowledge and practices into sustainable forest management policies.

3. A new green deed: community action for forest regeneration and poverty reduction, Jyothi Krishnan, independent researcher, India (author) and Abey George, Government of Kerala, India (co-author)

14. The case study reviewed the implementation of the joint forest management programme in one of the forested districts of the state of Kerala, India. Dr. Krishnan argued that joint forest management has, over the past couple of decades, provided the structural policy framework to support important opportunities for community participation in forest management, but it has not yet reached its potential. The fact that joint forest management falls under the Forest Department in India creates particular bureaucratic impediments to the policy's potential. The study also

explored the possibilities opened up by the implementation of more recent legislation known as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Highlighting both the opportunities and the constraints of these conservation-based livelihood assurance policies, the study argues that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act can complement initiatives taken under the joint forest management programme in Kerala in significant and beneficial ways. The participatory elements of joint forest management should be enhanced by the employment legislation to create funding and employment opportunities that are both participatory and environmentally sustainable, but she notes the many challenges that surface in translating legislated forest-related provisions into practice.

4. Software and hardware: the search for self-sustaining adaptive collaborative management systems: the model forests response, Mariteuw Chimère Diaw, African Model Forests Network secretariat

15. Dr. Diaw presented the model forests programme as one response to the critical need for programmes to deliver both development and conservation objectives. He described the International Model Forests Network, which includes dozens of model forests in countries around the world, and noted that the Model Forest approach provides a framework through which meaningful and inclusive participation can occur in areas such as resource management, and community and economic development. He discussed each of the programme's key principles: voluntary partnerships; commitment to sustainability; landscapes; governance; a programme of work; and learning and networking. He stressed the importance of ensuring that local communities, including traditionally marginalized groups, are full and active contributors. Among the lessons learned from the programme, he noted that while a model forest's governance and activities are defined at the local level, the overall effort must fit within national objectives and must be country-driven.

B. Participant discussions and recommendations

16. Participants joined one of four discussion groups. Each group had a facilitator and guiding questions. The groups were tasked with developing concrete recommendations directed towards the work of the ninth session of the Forum. Recommendations were discussed and refined during plenary. The four discussion topics were: Tenure rights, access and benefit sharing; Traditional forest-related knowledge; Community-based forest enterprises; and Women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups: leadership for sustainable forest management.

1. Tenure rights, access and benefit sharing (Facilitator: Ghan Shyam Pandey)

Discussion/questions

17. What type of system of tenure rights, access and benefit sharing will best ensure livelihood benefits and sustainable forest management? How can the situation on tenure rights, access and benefit sharing be improved? What can be done to close gaps and identify best practice?

Narrative summary and highlights

18. Participants recognized the significant existing variability in tenure systems, under which tenure over forests is influenced by both statutory and customary laws that differ from country to country. Participants also recognized the complexity of issues associated with tenure rights, access to resources, and the sharing of benefits derived from resources, but emphasized the fact that the goal of improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples and of eradicating poverty is strongly dependent upon secure, sustainable, equitable and transparent land tenure rights.

19. It was noted that, in both practice and in policy, there are important distinctions between tenure rights, ownership rights and access rights. Policy discussions regarding both national and international legal frameworks must clarify these concepts. Participants also stressed that all rights (access, tenure and ownership) need to be accompanied by responsibilities. The tenure rights and responsibility system must be interlinked with the benefit sharing system.

20. Discussants agreed that any system of tenure rights and access to forest resources must: (a) recognize the importance of multiple uses of forest resources by local people; (b) have as a central focus the livelihood requirements of poor and marginalized forest-dependent communities (including women and indigenous peoples); and (c) allow for significant and meaningful levels of access and local control over forest lands and forest resources, including a role in the decision-making structures that determine how the resources are to be used, and to whom the benefits from those resources will accrue. Importantly, tangible and intangible forest benefits must be incorporated into the system such that strategic watersheds, ecologically sensitive corridors, and biodiversity are protected. In addition to access and tenure rights, the system must ensure market access, sufficient support systems and other rights such as freedom of association. It was felt that there is a great need for capacity-building programmes at all levels that address educational, institutional, infrastructural, and other tenure-related issues.

21. Rights and responsibilities must be governed by a regulatory framework (either a national or international policy framework, or one that is based on customary law) that is developed with the active and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders, including especially women and indigenous peoples, that recognizes livelihood security, and that has adequate institutional support.

22. It was noted that there are particular contexts in which private ownership can enhance incentives for forest sustainability, whereas in other contexts private ownership of forest resources can serve to marginalize underrepresented groups. Thus any forest-related policy that designates tenure rights and access to forest resources must take into account the systemic incentives to either conserve or degrade forest resources, as well as the larger institutions that organize benefit sharing within the particular local context. In assessing the tenure rights and the sharing of benefits of forest resources, a range of values must be incorporated into the definition of what it means for something to be "sustainable". Sustainability must include ecological, cultural, economic and social elements. Both tangible and intangible benefits from forests must be accounted for.

Specific recommendations

23. The following recommendations emerged:

- Encourage Governments to undertake both land and forest tenure reforms
- Ensure discussions and processes related to benefit sharing include meaningful participation of local and indigenous communities
- Encourage Governments to establish a stable legal framework with the active involvement of all stakeholders, including women and indigenous peoples
- Facilitate the creation of effective institutions to implement the legal framework
- Promote capacity-building programmes at all levels that addresses educational, institutional, infrastructural, and other tenure-related issues
- Support pilot projects, case studies, and research endeavours that identify the gaps and possible solutions

2. Traditional forest-related knowledge (Facilitator: Joseph Cobbinah)

Guiding question

24. How can indigenous/traditional forest-related knowledge be applied to support improved livelihoods and sustainable forest management?

Key points of discussion

25. The group accepted a simple working understanding of traditional forest-related knowledge: Traditional forest-related knowledge, practices and techniques are distinctive to particular tribes, gender, communities and culture and are generally passed from generation to generation. They are not static, but constantly evolving and can relate to diverse scales (global, regional, national, local). The points of discussion included the following:

- Traditional forest-related knowledge is applied in myriad ways, including forecasting seasonal events and weather; timing agricultural activities; effectively using plants and animals for a variety of purposes; protecting watersheds, soil and forest resources, inter alia
- Traditional knowledge systems and modern scientific knowledge systems are not exclusive or incompatible. Traditional forest-related knowledge is a complementary and essential part of scientific knowledge systems
- Many taboos and beliefs favour sustainable forest management; for example, locally designated and protected sacred sites have been shown to be effective mechanisms for protection of forests
- Traditional forest-related knowledge education is lacking, and formal education in disciplines related to forestry or natural resource management or policy rarely includes traditional forest-related knowledge education
- Traditional forest-related knowledge has long been known to have important implications for forest management, conservation of forest biodiversity and identification of forest genetic resources

- Traditional forest-related knowledge often underpins sustainable forest management and sustainable livelihoods
- Commercialization and global markets are negatively impacting on sustainable forest management
- Biopiracy of traditional forest-related knowledge is an ongoing concern
- Traditional forest-related knowledge can play a role in healthy forests, which can serve to mitigate impacts of climate change (not only carbon, but water, O_2, soil protection, non-timber forest products, etc.)
- Traditional forest-related knowledge can support adaptation of indigenous peoples and local communities to climate change
- There is a serious gap in implementation of global conventions that recognize traditional forest-related knowledge at national and local levels
- Participants recognized a difficulty in obtaining information from users of traditional forest-related knowledge; many practices are shrouded in secrecy, and there is a lack of trust of scientists, which can make the goals of protecting and promoting traditional forest-related knowledge difficult

Narrative summary and highlights

26. Participants felt that work being done to further the understanding and recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge in other United Nations-related bodies must be recognized. This includes the very helpful deliberations that have been taking place under the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly in relation to article 8 (j). In addition, past recommendations, such as those from the international expert meeting on the implementation of traditional forest-related knowledge and related international commitments (San Jose, 6-12 December 2004) should be taken into account.

27. Participants agreed that national and international forest-related policies, laws and institutions must recognize the importance and legitimacy of traditional forest-related knowledge in maintaining forests and livelihood security for forest-dependent peoples. It was noted that, among other things, the best current understanding of traditional forest-related knowledge includes the understanding that its protection and promotion is linked inextricably with forest-dependent peoples' cultural and intellectual heritage, and to their secure rights to lands. Discussants believed that educational institutions must be leveraged to play a strong role in enhancing understanding of the importance of traditional forest-related knowledge. Governments and the United Nations Forum on Forests should work to ensure that current curriculums related to forest management and conservation include content and inputs related to traditional forest-related knowledge. Governments should also emphasize the importance of support for further research into traditional forest-related knowledge and the positive impact traditional practices can have on sustaining forests. Traditional forest-related knowledge must be recognized as a valuable complement to both past and contemporary scientific practices related to forest management and conservation, and practices utilized in forest management should incorporate relevant aspects of traditional forest-related knowledge. Participants agreed that forest-related policies must recognize it as a vital means of protecting forests and enhancing livelihoods of forest-dependent

peoples and that concrete measures must be taken to prevent the expropriation of forest-dependent communities' knowledge and resources. The collective, holistic and intergenerational nature of traditional forest-related knowledge must be recognized and supported within forest policy processes.

Specific recommendations

28. The following recommendations emerged:

- Traditional forest-related knowledge should be mainstreamed into national forest plans and programmes with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including local and indigenous communities
- Planning for sustainable forest management should be a participatory activity involving both traditional forest-related knowledge and modern scientific knowledge systems
- Countries should support further research on traditional forest-related knowledge and work with knowledge holders and users to create archives and novel ways to conserve and promote it
- An equitable benefit sharing regime should be developed
- Best practices to secure intellectual property rights in different countries should be recognized and a legal system of traditional forest-related knowledge protection should be established before creation of traditional forest-related knowledge archives and registries
- Indicators for monitoring of the role of traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management should be developed
- All Governments should ratify international conventions relevant to traditional forest-related knowledge and forests, and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting of implementation of global conventions should be established at country level involving major groups
- Traditional rights, social, cultural, spiritual and economic values of indigenous peoples should be recognized and respected
- Sacred sites should be conserved
- Traditional knowledge systems should be mainstreamed into formal education systems
- The general public should be educated about traditional forest-related knowledge and its importance in sustainable forest management

3. Community-based forest enterprises (Facilitator: Sim Heok-Choh)

Guiding questions

29. How can communities improve livelihoods from community-based forest enterprises through: (a) timber products; (b) non-timber products; and (c) ecosystem services?

Narrative summary and highlights

30. Participants accepted a working definition of community-based forest enterprises as enterprises with very strong inputs from communities in managing, exploring and giving values to forest resources, where benefits are shared equitably and accrue largely or wholly to the community.

31. Participants highlighted a number of common issues important to community-based enterprises, including: ownership; empowerment of communities for decision-making; consultation at decision-making processes; access to markets and market intelligence; establishment of a mechanism on benefit sharing; value addition; financing for local initiatives; recognizing payment for ecosystem services as an enterprise option; involvement of non-governmental organizations.

32. Participants noted that, in order to improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples through community-based forest enterprises, local communities must have access and ownership rights to timber products, non-timber forest products and ecosystem services.

33. They suggested that community-based forest enterprises should be based on adding value to raw forest resources so that greater benefits can accrue to the local communities rather than to non-local entities. They agreed that local communities must have access to markets and to market intelligence in order to effectively participate in community-based forest enterprises that increase the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples. Local communities must be consulted at all levels of decision-making regarding community-based forest enterprises. Moreover, discussants agreed that non-governmental organizations, Governments and forest-dependent communities should be effectively linked in order to promote community-based forest enterprises that enhance the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples.

34. Participants noted that measures to safeguard workers' safety and welfare must be developed and maintained. In order to enhance and maintain effective community-based forest enterprises, capacity-building must be geared towards developing local forest-dependent peoples' skills and technical capabilities. Payment for non-timber ecosystem services must be a viable option for community-based forest enterprises, as forest-dependent communities rely on a range of forest-related resources.

Specific recommendations

35. The following recommendations emerged:

Developing local businesses

- Encourage communities to move up the value chain (i.e., not concentrating only on primary production) and develop strategy to position small local businesses in higher-value activities
- Vigorously support the establishment of community-based forest enterprises based on advanced processing and marketing of timber and non-timber products
- Support the development of small forest enterprises focused on packaging and delivering high quality environmental services and opportunities for capturing land rents, etc.

- Support and regulate second tier intermediary organizations linking the community-based forest enterprise to next users along the value chain

Creating enabling conditions

- Promote research, development and training programmes and academic curricula focused on supporting community-based forest enterprises and small/medium forestry enterprise
- Develop mechanisms to improve local understanding and positioning in the value chain for optimal benefits
- Develop programmes and guidelines to enhance entrepreneurial options, skills, know-how and practices for local businesses
- Institute financing mechanisms with a clear focus on developing local businesses and value addition
- Facilitate financing and technical support to community-based forest enterprises by national and local governments
- Develop institutional arrangements for standardization and certification of community-based forest enterprises products
- Facilitate stakeholder agreements and legal arrangements that recognize and protect community rights (e.g., intellectual property rights, land trees rights, carbon rights, market and export rights)
- Develop mechanisms to enhance communities' access to markets, market intelligence and communication

Ensuring environmental and social safeguards

- Support multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate good environmental governance and sustainable management of local natural resources
- Match the development of community-based value chain with efforts to analyse, anticipate, monitor and correct negative environmental and social impacts
- Support and enforce measures to safeguard workers' safety, welfare and skill training
- Address inclusive benefit sharing
- Strengthen fair private-community partnerships

4. Women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups: leadership for sustainable forest management (Facilitator: Wangu Mutua)

Guiding questions

36. How can women, indigenous peoples and other underprivileged forest-dependent peoples be recognized as leaders and partners in forest management? Why are the groups often not recognized? Where are they currently recognized: are there successes? How do we assure their recognition at all levels?

Key points of discussion

37. Participants noted ways in which these groups are currently recognized:

- Within some community forest associations, although forest access is often limited
- Community forest guidelines on participation of women and decision-making and management (e.g., case of Nepal)
- As major groups of the United Nations Forum on Forests
- As providers of labour
- Rights in employment/labour matters but not in reality (International Labour Organization Convention 169, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)
- Recognition by some United Nations agencies
- No recognition in some United Nations bodies and specialized agencies
- No safeguard policy in World Bank; e.g., for forest workers and their unions, which results in laws not being obeyed

38. Participants noted reasons why these groups are not recognized:

- Urban populations are not aware/not concerned with rural issues; need to convey importance of forests management
- Lack of effective, strong associations; need to highlight good examples
- Law status and stereotyping of indigenous peoples and women; often they are not seen as capable
- Lack of interest to see women as having special needs that differ from "communities"
- Kind of forestry that women do; subsistence farmers, challenge of big companies
- Lack of legal recognitions; limited/no title to land ownership
- Many grass-roots women are not educated or informed about key issues
- Gender bias in forestry profession
- Many gender advocates not interested in following developments regarding forests

39. Participants suggested ways to ensure recognition at all levels:

- Get them into processes: work at national level with governments and highlight the contribution of each group to forest; e.g., link to key issues: food security, energy, livelihoods
- Use the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: influence the Committee, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women, etc.
- Disseminate case studies on the groups' role in forests

- Form strategic alliances of major groups, to work collaboratively
- Get secure tenure/rights to forest and carbon, recognition of communal-traditional rights; use this to build solidarity

40. Participants cited four necessary elements: tenure, individual or collective; fair market access; good quality support services (credit, technical assistance); and strong associations (at all levels, linked from community to global level), recognized by Governments, that know issues and rights.

Narrative summary and highlights

41. Participants agreed that equitable and sustainable forest management institutions must ensure that women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized forest-dependent people have secure access to forest resources. Noting that women often have different needs and responsibilities with regard to forest resources than men, women must be engaged at all levels of forest policy decision-making. While women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized peoples have crucial knowledge regarding resource management, and should be encouraged to participate at all levels of forest-related policymaking, their marginalization may also prevent them from accessing education and technical knowledge regarding sustainable forest management. Practical support for their participation must be available in order to ensure that their voices can be integrated into forest policy-related processes. This should include capacity-building among marginalized groups (including negotiation skills and knowledge of rights, inter alia).

42. Discussants noted that as conclusions drawn in forest policy-related arenas outside of the United Nations Forum on Forests (such as those related to REDD and REDD-plus) will impact women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups, linkages must be made between the work of the Forum and other forest-related policy deliberations. Linkages between women's, indigenous peoples' and other marginalized groups' development organizations (such as UNIFEM) and agreements (such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) need to be linked with organizations related to the promotion of sustainable forest management.

Specific recommendations

43. The following recommendations emerged:

- Develop case studies highlighting situations where communities/individuals have clear rights, where those rights have shown to contribute to results for environment and equity, in order to show how secure tenure is critical and how to achieve this
- Link to land rights advocates under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, UNIFEM, social movements, strategies for political empowerment
- Deliver gender awareness and sensitivity training for diverse stakeholders, including international agencies; government policymakers; forestry institutions (including forestry schools, departments); extension service providers; non-governmental organizations; community members

- Provide training in practical leadership skills, negotiation, etc. for women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups, to help them know and articulate their rights and provide strong leadership for sustainable forest management
- Advocate for marginalized groups to participate fully in consultations at all levels; major groups could monitor participation to ensure diversity and effectiveness
- Share information and examples of interlinkages (e.g., between tenure and poverty)
- Focus on tenure and political/economic empowerment to address larger social obstacles to the participation of marginalized groups
- Support processes of organizational change within forestry institutions

C. Key cross-cutting issues that emerged across all four working groups

44. Following are key cross-cutting issues that emerged across all four working groups:

(a) Meaningful participation is needed in order to strengthen policy frameworks;

(b) Individual contexts need to be taken into account in order to ensure that policies are equitable and promote the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples;

(c) A strong forest policy needs to address issues associated with equity in terms of access, rights, land and resources tenure, and benefits generated from forests;

(d) Capacity-building is needed in order to effectively implement policies related to sustainable forest management (livelihoods, poverty reduction, etc.) and ensure active inclusion of marginalized groups;

(e) More work should be done to integrate the achievements made in other United Nations forums on issues that are vital to forest-dependent communities. Connections between the work of the Forum and other related United Nations bodies must be strengthened and enhanced;

(f) Research and knowledge generation that emphasizes the needs of forest-dependent communities must be encouraged, supported and enhanced.

D. Key policy recommendations (communiqué)

45. The participants in the workshop issued a communique in which they underscored the importance of forests in providing diverse livelihood benefits, ecosystem services and biodiversity stores, and stressed the fact that livelihoods of forest-dependent people are integrally linked to the sustainability of forests.

46. The participants recognized the many attempts to date of member Governments and other stakeholders to advance sustainable forest management

through the Forum, and developed key recommendations linked to the themes of tenure rights, access and benefit sharing, traditional forest-related knowledge, community-based forest enterprises, and leadership for sustainable forest management among women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

47. To build on gains so far made, the meeting produced a number of key recommendations:

(a) Further concrete steps should be taken to ensure meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including in particular women, youth and indigenous peoples, in order to strengthen policy frameworks;

(b) Forest policy must address issues associated with equity in terms of access, rights, land and resources tenure, and benefits generated from forests. Reforms should be undertaken where necessary to ensure that rights and responsibilities are upheld;

(c) Case studies that demonstrate innovative practice (such as participatory mapping) and successful implementation, should be highlighted, shared and used to inform policy decisions;

(d) Forest-dependent peoples must have reliable access to forest resources, and must have a role in the decision-making structures that decide how the resources are to be used, and to whom the benefits from those resources will accrue;

(e) Policies must take into account local contexts in order to ensure that they are equitable and promote the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples;

(f) Capacity-building efforts must be strengthened at all levels and among all groups (including indigenous peoples, women, youth and other marginalized groups) in order to effectively implement policies related to sustainable forest management (e.g., livelihoods, poverty reduction);

(g) Community-based forest enterprises that focus on sustainable, value added goods and services should be promoted and supported, and payment for ecosystem services must be a viable option;

(h) National and international forest-related policies, laws and institutions should recognize the importance and legitimacy of traditional forest-related knowledge and local knowledge in maintaining forests and livelihood security for forest-dependent peoples, and take steps to incorporate it into planning and implementation;

(i) Research and knowledge generation that emphasizes the needs of forest-dependent communities must be encouraged, supported and enhanced. Traditional forest-related knowledge must be documented in close collaboration with knowledge holders, and individuals and communities must receive fair compensation for use of their knowledge;

(j) More work should be done to integrate the achievements of other United Nations forums on issues that are vital to forest-dependent communities. Connections between the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other related United Nations bodies must be strengthened and enhanced.

IV. Enhancing major group participation in the United Nations Forum on Forests

48. Tim Cadman, from the University of Southern Queensland, set the context for the discussion by sharing the results of his research on major group involvement in the United Nations Forum on Forests. Participants then addressed the question of how best to enhance major groups participation in the Forum process around three themes. The first theme addressed the effective representation of major groups at the forum. The second theme addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the multi-stakeholder dialogue process within the Forum. The third theme explored the question of how to enhance activities and engagement of major groups in the Forum during the intersessional periods between Forum meetings.

A. Major group participation in the Forum: framing the discussion

49. Dr. Cadman's talk served to frame the discussion on the effectiveness of major group involvement in the Forum process. His results, which also included findings from a survey of Forum participants, shed light on the current and future participation of major groups.

(a) Major group participation in Forum deliberations has been inconsistent over time. After an initial period of significant involvement at the inception of the Forum, major groups' involvement has declined in recent forums, to the extent that some groups no longer participate. This relative lack of major group participation threatens to undermine the credibility of the Forum in the eyes of both State and non-State interests.

(b) Future success of the Forum and re-engagement of major groups will depend significantly on governance arrangements that are broadly representative of diverse interest types and groups, accountable and transparent, effective in terms of decision-making processes, and able to change behaviour on the ground and create lasting problem-solving mechanisms.

B. Effective representation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests

50. Participants proposed the following recommendations in order to enhance effective representation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests:

- Strengthen consultations at country/regional level between Governments and major groups.
- Secure funds to ensure representation of focal points for major groups.
- Secure funds to facilitate country/regional consultations.
- Include one or two major groups representatives within country delegations, chosen on the advice of major groups, who would act as expert advisers to the delegation.
- Map existing experts and processes at the country and regional levels.

- Capture and produce combined messages and best practices in a video
- Build on global and regional networks

C. Multi-stakeholder dialogue

51. Participants discussed the multi-stakeholder dialogue process, highlighting weakness in the current process, and proposing recommendations to strengthen the multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Weaknesses of the multi-stakeholder dialogue

- Major groups are mostly seated at the back and generally only read statements, with little additional interaction or activity
- Major group statements rarely elicit reaction, comments or questions from government delegates
- At times governments misunderstand or downplay issues important to major groups (e.g., tenure issues)
- There is a gap in the use of terminology and definitions
- Major groups can become discouraged by the perceived lack of interest of some Governments, which can discourage participation of major groups in subsequent sessions
- Presentation of statements has often involved the rushed reading of long documents, which does not allow the effective communication of ideas and concerns of major groups

Recommendations

- The multi-stakeholder dialogue should begin early in home countries, not just in New York. For example, major groups should have a draft position that can be discussed at the national and regional levels for feedback far in advance of sessions held in New York
- Major groups should network, lobby and dialogue at country and regional level, e.g., the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community
- There must be serious efforts to identify and explore ways of involving Governments
- Members of major groups should be included in government delegations
- Major groups must work to improve delivery of statements (for example, by using creative and/or multimedia approaches, such as video)
- Major groups should explore the possibility of preparing joint statements
- Good examples from countries should be documented and shared as case studies

- Specific efforts should be made to ensure that major group recommendations are taken seriously and incorporated (major groups should politely insist on reactions from Governments on major group statements)
- Space in the official programme should be created for major group communication with delegates, beyond the mere reading of statements
- Greater efforts should be made to include groups left out in the delegations
- Major groups should be engaged more actively between sessions

D. Engagement of major groups between sessions of the United Nations Forum on Forests

52. Participants identified specific intersessional activities and plans for the period between the ninth and tenth sessions of the Forum, while answering the question, "How can major groups participate and play a key role at national and regional levels?".

Key recommendations for enhancing intersessional activities

- Major groups should make efforts to participate in existing events related to sustainable forest management at the national and regional level, including engaging in forest-related events linked to different United Nations processes and institutions
- The concept and roles of major groups must be promoted at the country level as a way to generate greater involvement of all stakeholders
- Major groups could provide information and raise awareness on the Forum through seminars, workshops and other activities
- Major group representatives working on forests should engage other major group members at the national level
- Governments should involve major groups in national activities related to sustainable forest management
- Major groups should submit their recommendations at the national level before every Forum meeting
- Major groups of the Forum should prepare for forest discussions at the session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2012-2013 and cooperate with Commission on Sustainable Development groups at the national and regional level
- Intersessional meetings of major groups should be organized by region or by major group, and major groups should organize a workshop on economic aspects of sustainable forest management in preparation for the tenth session of the Forum
- Major groups could be active in monitoring non-forest products and the forest instrument implementation in pilot countries
- There should be capacity-building activities for major groups through workshops, seminars, etc.

- Major groups should be involved as experts in the preparation of country presentations to the Forum as well as in reporting back for monitoring
- The issue of regular and ongoing funding for intersessional major group initiatives should be addressed as part of forest financing discussions

V. The International Year of Forests 2011

53. Participants discussed the upcoming International Year of Forests (2011), and began planning for activities related to the celebration. Goals of the sessions were to identify specific activities for major groups contribution to the International Year of Forests and to foster alliances, partnerships and networking within major groups and between major groups and other key players in the Forum process.

A. United Nations Forum on Forests and the International Year of Forests: plans and opportunities for engagement

54. The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat gave a presentation on the International Year of Forests and indicated that the launch of the Year would take place in New York in early February 2011, during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the Forum. The presentation emphasized that the goals of the International Year of Forests are to amplify the issues related to forests in order to increase visibility of forests and raise the profile of forest-related dynamics. The primary theme of the International Year of Forests is "Forests for people", which is intended to emphasize not only the importance of forests for individuals' livelihoods, but also the collaborative work that is required in order to make progress towards achieving such goals as the Millennium Development Goals and other United Nations-related agreements. The secretariat noted that throughout the International Year of Forests in 2011 a variety of activities and campaigns will be taking place that are designed to raise awareness of the importance of forests. "Forest Ambassadors" will also be selected to promote the International Year of Forests and champion the cause of sustainable forest management. Ultimately, the Forum secretariat emphasized the importance of engaging major groups in developing their own celebrations and activities surrounding the International Year of Forests in order to ensure its broad success.

B. Major activities identified by major groups for the International Year of Forests

55. Following the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat's presentation on the International Year of Forests, major groups identified activities for the Year:

- Prepare policy briefs, fact sheet, flyers, posters, technical documents
- Prepare information packages and educational materials (for schools, the public and distribution within existing networks)
- Organize national launches for the International Year of Forests
- Host regional seminars/workshops on topical issues

- Find "Ambassadors" from all regions to promote the International Year of Forests and sustainable forest management
- Organize a traditional ceremony by elders during the launch of the International Year of Forests 2011
- Provide microgrants for non-governmental organizations and local communities to work on forest issues
- Prepare and disseminate information on what the International Year of Forests means to indigenous peoples and translate it into local languages
- Organize mass-media and public relations campaigns about the International Year of Forests (through television, radio, newspapers)
- Link with education systems and community groups to get the message out
- Use creative approaches and emphasize a hopeful message
    - Set up awards for videos made by students — for use on web pages and at events
    - Music concerts, community events, parades
    - Contests — songs, poetry, art
    - Tree planting — in schools, companies, communities
- Partner with and gain support from the United Nations Forum on Forests for outreach, sponsor identification and approach, etc.
- Prepare newsletters and position papers (web-based)
- Encourage national television programmes on forest issues (possible link to United Nations Forum on Forests initiative with National Geographic)

VI. Closing ceremony

56. The official closing ceremony was held on the afternoon of Friday, 30 July 2010. The chair of the organizing committee, Lambert Okrah, officially commenced the ceremony by reading the workshop communiqué (see paras. 45-47 above) for the assembled delegates and journalists. Following the presentation of the communiqué he encouraged major groups to continue in earnest their work in contributing to the United Nations Forum on Forests, and asked participants to consider how they could further enhance this process.

57. Representing participants, Wangu Mutua formally thanked the Steering Committee, the supporting Governments, and the host Government of Ghana. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in a workshop in order to contribute directly and meaningfully to the United Nations Forum on Forests.

58. Henry Ford Kamel, Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana, delivered the closing address on behalf of Collins Dauda, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources for Ghana. The Deputy Minister thanked the sponsors, organizers, and participants for contributing to the success of the event. He stressed the importance of events such as the workshop that help to build necessary momentum for advancing the work of the United Nations Forum on

Forests towards sustainable forest management and poverty eradication. He said that the Government of Ghana was looking forward to submitting the report of the initiative to the United Nations Forum on Forests, to become part of the official documentation of the ninth session of the Forum.

Annex

List of workshop participants

E. E. K. Acquah-Moses
Ghana Timber Millers Organization
Ghana
eek.acquahmoses@yahoo.com

Wale Adeleke
International Union for Conservation of Nature
Ghana
adewale.adeleke@iucn.org

Julius Adewopo
International Forest Students' Association
United States of America
Adewopo@uamont.edu

Yawo Gator Adufu
Institute of Cultural Affairs
Togo
ica_tg@yahoo.fr

Matilda Akua Afriyie
Conservation and Development Foundation
Ghana
condef2006@gmail.com

Jane Akem Tarh Takang
Coordinator Women Advocating for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
West Central Africa
Cameroon
janetarh@wocan.org

Stephanie Altman
European Union
Cameroon
stephanie.l.altman@gmail.com

Patrice André Pa'ah
Coopérative Agro Forestière de la Trinationale (CAFT)
Cameroon
caft.cameroun@gmail.com

Ekua Ansah-Eshon
Advocates and Trainers for Women's Welfare Advancements and Rights
Ghana
attwwar@yahoo.com

Joshua Ansah
Timber and Wood Workers Union
Ghana
twwu@DSL.ghana.com

Nana Appiah
Ghana National Forestry Forum
Ghana
jkowblankson@yahoo.co.uk

Elizabeth Ardayfio-Schandorf
Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana
Ghana
ardayfel@ug.edu.gh

Marcial Arias Garcia
International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Tropical Forests
Panama
ariasmarcial@gmail.com

Eunice Asante
Ministry of Environment
Ghana

Alex Asare
Forestry Commission
Ghana
abasare99@yahoo.com

Kaisha Atakhanova
EcoCenter
Kazakhstan
kaisha_07@mail.ru

Kingsley Bekoe Ansah
Forest Watch
Ghana
kingsley@civicresponse.org

Dominic Blay
Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
Ghana
dblay@csir-forig.org.gh

Saadia Bobtoya
International Union for Conservation of Nature
Ghana
sbobtoya@yahoo.com

Tim Cadman
The Wilderness Society
Australia
tim.cadman@usq.edu.au

Ben Chikamai
Kenya Forestry Research Institute
Kenya
benchikamai@ngara.org

Alberto Chinchilla Cascante
Asociación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de Agroforestería Comunitaria de Centroamérica
Costa Rica
achinchilla@acicafoc.org

Annisa Choiriatun
International Forestry Students Association
Indonesia
annisa.ifsa@gmail.com

Joseph Cobbinah
Forestry Research Institute
Ghana
jcobbinah@forig.org

Tolulope Daramola
International Forest Students' Association
Nigeria
t.daramola@yahoo.com

Peter deMarsh
Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners
Canada
grandpic@nbnet.nb.ca

Mariteuw Chimère Diaw
African Model Forest Network
Cameroon
c.diaw@africanmodelforests.org

Ilia Domashov
Ecological Movement "BIOM"
Kyrgyzstan
idomashov@gmail.com

Gary Dunning
The Forest Dialogue
United States of America
info@theforestdialogue.org

Lauren Eastwood
State University of New York at Plattsburgh
United States of America
eastwole@plattsburgh.edu

Jeannette Gurung
Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
United States of America
jeannettegurung@wocan.org

Kassimou Issotina
Lambassa Institute of Cultural Affairs
Benin
lambassica@yahoo.fr

Liu Jinlong
School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development
Renmin University
China
liujinlong_rl@hotmail.com

Edna Kaptoyo
Indigenous Information Network
Kenya
ednakaptoyo@yahoo.com

Njeri Kariuki
United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat
United States of America
kariukin@un.org

Leena Karjalainen-Balk
Ministry of the Environment
Land Use Department
Finland
leena.karjalainen-balk@ymparisto.fi

Jyothi Krishnan
Government of Kerala
India
jyothikr07@gmail.com

Andrey Laletin
Friends of the Siberian Forests
Russian Federation
sibforest@akadem.ru

Kanchan Lama
Women Advocating for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Coordinator for Nepal
Nepal
kanchanlama@wocan.org

Ivar Legallais-Korsbakken
Norwegian Forest Owners' Federation
Norway
ivar.legallais.korsbakken@online.no

Bastiaan Louman
Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre
Costa Rica
blouman@catie.ac.cr

Mawuli Lumor
Ghana National Forestry Forum
Ghana
mawuli.lumor@gmail.com

Yunus MacDana
Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
Ghana

Joe Macharia
Building and Wood Workers' International East Africa
Kenya
joe.macharia@bwint.org

Pelelo Magane
Chemical Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union
South Africa
secretariat@ceppwawu.org.za

Stewart Maginnis
International Union for Conservation of Nature
Switzerland
stewart.maginnis@iucn.org

Peter Marr
Institute of Cultural Affairs Ghana
Ghana
icagha@gmail.com

Jan L. McAlpine
United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat
United States of America
mcalpine@un.org

Wisdom Mensah
Institute of Cultural Affairs Ghana
Ghana
wisdommensah@hotmail.com

Oloka Mesilamu
Uganda Building Construction Union
Uganda
olokamesilamu@yahoo.com

Wangu Mutua
Vi Agroforestry
Kenya
wangum2002@yahoo.com

Cécile Ndjebet
Cameroon Ecology
Cameroon
cndjebet@yahoo.com

Beatrice Obiri-Darko
Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
Ghana
bdobiri@csir-forig.org.gh

Lambert Okrah
The Institute of Cultural Affairs International
Canada
lambert@ica-international.org

Omosebi Oloruntobi Opeyemi
International Forest Students' Association
Nigeria
Tobiomosebi2003@yahoo.co.uk

Paul Opanga
Building and Wood Workers' International Africa
South Africa
paul.opanga@bwint.org

Lydia Opoku
Ghana
Arko_fordjuor@yahoo.com

Abdou Karim Ouedraogo
Building and Wood Workers' International West Africa
Burkina Faso
abdoukarim.ouedraogo@bwint.org

Mercy Owusu-Ansah
Forestry Commission
Ghana
mercyowusuansah@yahoo.com

Yasemin Ozturk
International Forest Students' Association
Turkey
jasmyn_oz84@hotmail.com

Lu Qian
Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation secretariat
China
lu_qian@apfnet.cn

Dankama Quarm
Centre for Agroforestry Business Development
Ghana
asefoquarm@gmail.com

Gustav Quayson
Environmental Protection Network
Ghana
Stav2s@yahoo.co.uk

Tamrini Said
Department of Commercial Crops, Government of the United Republic of Tanzania
United Republic of Tanzania
tamrini@yahoo.com

Hubertus Samangun
Ikatan Cendekiawan Tanimbar
Indonesia
Indonesia
hsamangun@yahoo.com

Kamala Sharma
Himalayan Grasstoots Women's Natural Resources Management Association
Nepal
nhimawan@wlink.com.np

Ghan Shyam Pandey
Federation of Community Forestry Users
Nepal
pandeygs2002@yahoo.com

Heok-Choh Sim
Asia-Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions secretariat
Malaysia
sim@apafri.org

Riko Stefanus
Yayasan Cikal
Indonesia
cikal_ecotourism@yahoo.co.id

Charles Uwiragiye
Rwanda
uwiragiyec@yahoo.com

Michael Watson
The Institute of Cultural Affairs International
Canada
mwatson@ica-international.org

Doreen A. Yeboah
Ghana National Forestry Forum
Ghana

Chavdar Zhelev
International Forest Students' Association
Bulgaria
chavdar_ifsa@yahoo.com